KILGORE: Bush as the new Nixon **RANGE:** Michael Moore's excesses

THE NEW DEMOCRAT

BLUEPRINT

IDEAS FOR A NEW CENTURY

How Kerry Can WIN

by Al From & Bruce Reed

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SPECIAL REPORT

55 Ways to Slash Bush's Deficit

by Paul Weinstein Jr.

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Early retirement

These are good days for Democrats. They have emerged from one of the most intense primary seasons in memory with an energized party and a head of election steam that positions them to win back the White House. Far from feeling divided and in disarray, as they were one year ago, Democrats are now the party of unity, purpose, and drive. That's why some of them, like Al From and Bruce Reed, are confident that Sen. John Kerry can unseat President Bush in seven months. In their 2003 political memos, From and Reed argued for hope over anger. By selecting Kerry as their nominee, Democrats have chosen that path.

From and Reed are convinced that Bush's glaring inability to solve the nation's real problems—from jobs to education to health care—leave him open to early retirement. As they point out in their new political memo, the president's small-bore State of the Union speech, along with the Republicans' hollow election strategy, "hands Democrats a golden opportunity to be the party of ideas and Americans' only hope for change." Their memo outlines five rules that Kerry can follow to realize this opportunity.

One thing voters increasingly understand is the danger of the enormous deficits the Bush administration has created with its reckless tax cuts. The 10-year projection for the deficit is now $4 *trillion*, and counting. As Paul Weinstein Jr. writes, the nation needs alternatives to the White House's mindless "borrow-and-spend" habits. And there are alternatives: While the administration has dawdled, Weinstein has outlined no less than 55 ways we could slash the president's deficit *right now.*

The president's economic mismanagement, of course, has its political uses. He has attempted, though mostly failed, to create a quick-fix economic boom while plunging the nation into chronic debt, all to ensure his reelection in 2004. This put Ed Kilgore in mind of another president who chose short-term political expediency over the long-term fiscal health of the nation: Richard Nixon. In his comparison of Bush's current tactics with Nixon's in 1972, Kilgore notes that both presidents packed the stimulative effects of their tax cuts into the months before the presidential vote, while shoving the long-term cost into the next two decades.

Will Marshall, in an analysis of how Democrats arrived at their present optimistic state, notes that the failure of Howard Dean's campaign teaches the salient lesson that running against the legacy of Bill Clinton is a doomed strategy. Voters know they had it good in the 1990s; they prefer the radical pragmatism of centrist-leaning politics to the ideological purism of those who still believe the myth of the hidden (liberal) majority, writes Marshall.

The general election began early; it promises to get rough before Election Day. But if Democrats can stay as centered and grounded in November as they are today—resisting the siren temptations to chase Ralph Nader to the left and neglect the swing voters—their days in the wilderness can be over.

—Peter Ross Range

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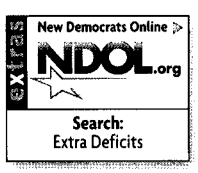

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The Road to

Here are five rules for the Democratic candidate to follow in the coming battle for the presidency.

| *by* AL FROM *and* BRUCE REED

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TO: SEN. JOHN F. KERRY
FROM: AL FROM AND BRUCE REED
SUBJECT: HOW YOU CAN WIN

Congratulations! You've saved your party, and now you have a chance to save your country.

For more than a year, we have said that George W. Bush was vulnerable. Thanks to you, people are finally starting to believe it.

All along, Bushism has been a bust at solving the country's problems. With his anemic State of the Union address, the president signaled that he has now given up trying. America faces enormous challenges at home and abroad, from the economy to the deficit to security. Yet Bush isn't offering a single new idea to merit a second term.

Instead, the White House is planning to run the most negative campaign in recent memory. All Bush has to offer is fear itself: fear of terrorism, fear of gay marriage, fear of Democrats.

No one should underestimate the power of the White House, or Republicans' determination to

Al From is founder and CEO of the Democratic Leadership Council. **Bruce Reed** is president of the DLC and was President Clinton's domestic policy adviser.

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Victory

hold onto it at any cost. Defeating an incumbent president is always difficult—and this president will be no exception. Don't be deceived by early favorable polls.

But Bush is diminishing himself and the office with a relentlessly negative campaign that makes him look more like a political hatchet man than a president. The hollow Republican strategy hands Democrats a golden opportunity to be the party of ideas and Americans' only hope for change. That high road is your best path to victory.

Last May, we warned against the most dangerous myths about the Democratic primaries: that the only path to the nomination was off the left side of the road, and that a Democrat had no chance in 2004. Just as we had hoped, over the past year you shattered those notions. In this memo, we spell out five rules of the road to victory.

PARTY TRADITION: Kerry reminds many of Andrew Jackson, the first war hero to win the Democratic nomination, and of John F. Kennedy, another decorated veteran.

Rule No. 1: Hope Beats Anger

Don't forget how you got this far: Democratic primary voters rejected the old politics of anger, and chose the politics of hope and opportunity instead. The optimistic, New Democrat formula that worked for Bill Clinton worked for you as well. Democrats wanted a candidate who had real answers to their problems, from jobs to health care to education. They also desperately wanted a candidate who could dispatch the biggest problem in their lives: George W. Bush.

Indeed, this primary campaign may prove to be the best thing to happen to the Democratic Party since Bill Clinton came along. Democrats were presented a clear choice: whether to continue Clintonism, with its pragmatic emphasis on offering positive solutions that excite Democrats and independents alike, or to revert to the party's old ways of running on anger instead of ideas—a narrow appeal to the Democratic base. You won because once again, rank-and-file Democrats made the right choice.

Never before have primaries done so much for a party. In early January, when Bush had just captured Saddam Hussein and Gov. Howard Dean was the presumptive Democratic nominee, Democrats' favorable to unfavorable rating in the CNN/Gallup/USA Today poll stood at 47 percent to 44 percent. Just three weeks later, after a positive campaign that turned you, not Dean, into the Democratic standard-bearer, the party enjoyed a 22-point swing to 59 percent to 34 percent.

But the Democratic primaries offer a lesson that goes beyond party: Voters are looking for real answers and for optimism, not attacks. As you said at the Iowa Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner, "We believe in a Democratic Party of real solutions, of real leaders, that offers a real deal to the American people—the Democratic Party of Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, John Kennedy and Bill Clinton. They brought hope and leadership and next year we need to do the same. We need to offer answers, not just anger. Solutions, not just slogans."

As Republicans launch what may become the nastiest sustained attack in decades, Democrats should take the lesson of the primaries to heart. Don't let the attacks go unanswered, but don't fall into the trap of letting them set the tone and context of the debate, either. You offer the American people what Bush will not: the answers they deserve and the change they long for.

Rule No. 2: Swing Voters Need a Home

With a better win-loss record than Pedro Martinez and Curt Schilling combined, you've locked up the nomination and energized the party base. That makes you president of the Democrats. To become president of the United States, you will have to excite swing voters as well.

We're all for pointing out Bush's failures, but a strategy aimed solely at firing up the party faithful is a dangerous one for Democrats because the numbers just don't add up. About one-third of all voters are hard-core Democrats and about 10 percent more usually vote Democratic. So even if every one of them marched to the polls, you would still need another 7 to 10 percent of the electorate to win.

A recent study by the authoritative Pew Research Center identified fully 29 percent of the voters this fall as

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swing voters who could go either way. Because both you and Bush are likely to win more than 90 percent of your hardcore partisans, these swing voters will be the decisive factor.

Some argue the opposite—that a spirited campaign will enlarge the base enough to win without swing voters. They're wrong. To win you need to inspire both.

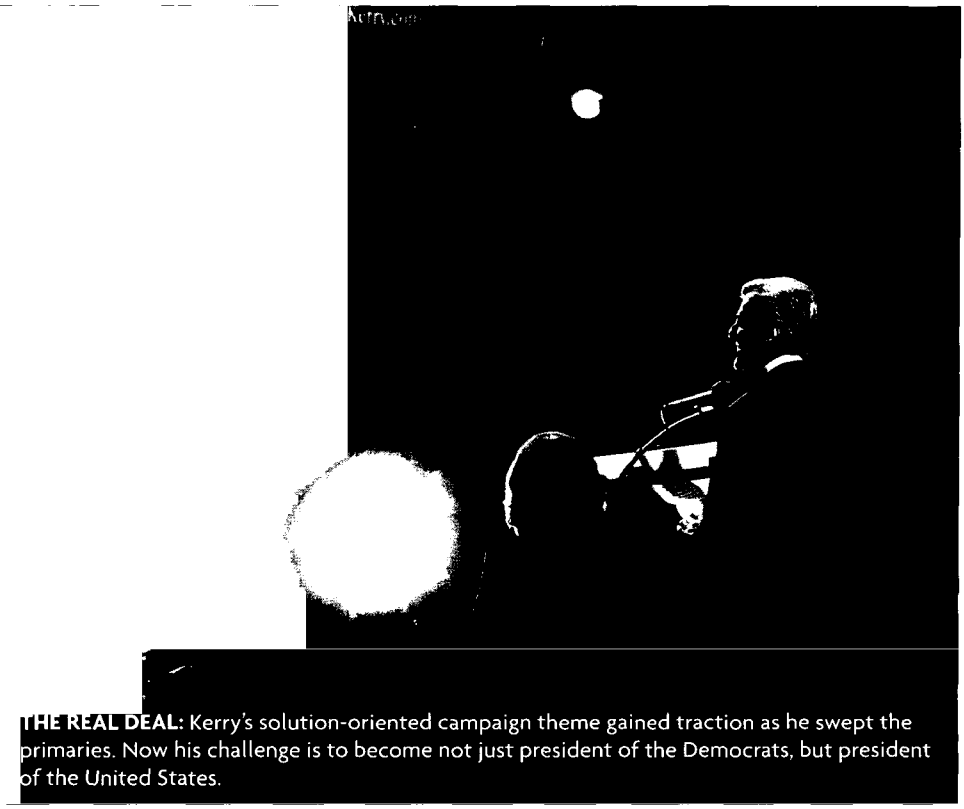
The broad coalition you need to win next fall is there for the taking if you offer a positive agenda of new ideas and capture the mantle of reform and change. The heavy turnout in open primaries shows that if you make your case, independents and even some Republicans are ready to support a Democrat this fall. That's good news, because you can't win without them.

To survive the general election campaign, you will need to avoid the traps that your adversaries will set for you. Don't let the White House lure you into an ideological election between liberals and conservatives. Plain and simple, there are more conservative than liberal voters in America. That's true even among swing voters. According to Pew, 34 percent of swing voters are self-identified conservatives, 48 percent are moderates, and just 14 percent call themselves liberals. That's why Karl Rove would love to polarize the election, and drive all voters into their ideological and cultural corners.

With Ralph Nader's entry into the race, some will urge you to chase him to the left. Don't do it. In pursuing Nader, you would lose more independents to Bush than you would ever lose to Nader on the left. The best way to deal with Nader is to talk about the future—and let voters conclude for themselves that his argument is about the past.

The Bush campaign would like nothing more than for you to abandon the Clinton-New Democrat formula. After all, it's the only Democratic formula in nearly half a century that has appealed successfully to both the Democratic faithful and to swing voters. Republicans will try to define you as a pre-Clinton old Democrat because that's the kind of candidate they'll always beat. Don't give them that opportunity.

Finally, define yourself on your own terms, not theirs. As the 1988 campaign showed, Democrats often try to dispel uncomfortable stereotypes–on guns, taxes, and national security—by avoiding the subjects altogether. But the truth is, what you don't say can hurt you. Americans for Gun Safety surveyed the prevailing political wisdom that Democrats shouldn't even talk about guns. They found the opposite—that when a Democratic candidate doesn't say where he stands on guns, most voters assume he wants to take their guns away. If you want to keep Republicans from filling in the blanks, don't leave any.



THE REAL DEAL: Kerry's solution-oriented campaign theme gained traction as he swept the primaries. Now his challenge is to become not just president of the Democrats, but president of the United States.

Rule No. 3: Ideas and Results Matter

We've heard Bill Clinton say it a hundred times: "Elections are about the future, not the past." That's a battle Democrats can win, even against a popular incumbent, because Bush's best days may be behind him. This White House believes timing is everything. The trouble with that is that sacrificing Bush's ability to solve tomorrow's problems to gain today's headlines will leave him worse off over the long haul.

Bush is in trouble today because he forgot the most basic rule of American politics: Results matter. Compassionate conservatism was supposed to usher in a new era of Republican interest in domestic solutions. Unfortunately, Bush and his party have proved better at causing problems than solving them: The economy can't create jobs despite hundreds of billions of dollars of stimulus from expensive, ill-designed tax cuts. The price tag of the new Medicare law is soaring even faster than prescription drug costs. With a record $477 billion deficit, Bush pre-

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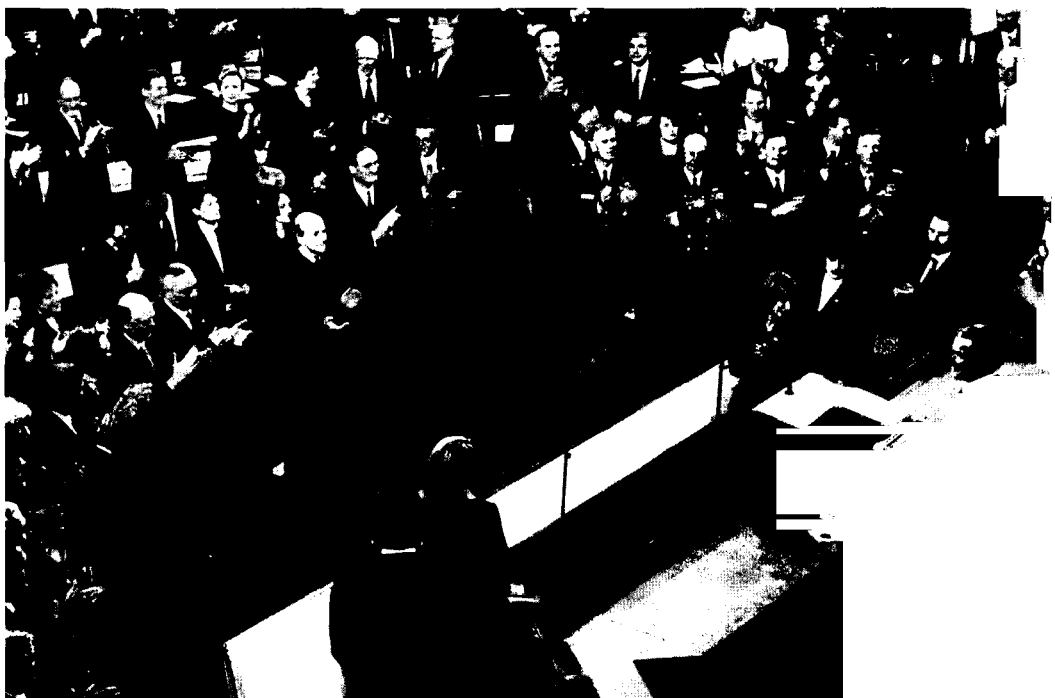
sented what can only be called the Justin Timberlake budget, ripping off the taxpayers and pretending it wasn't on purpose.

Like President Nixon in 1972, Bush has created an election-year bubble; he has not laid the foundation for long-term growth. He has squandered the 1990s Clinton prosperity, lost jobs, and put us back in deep debt. Bush has proved the country can't borrow and spend its way to long-term prosperity.

Bush paid a heavy price for three years of tax cuts and one strong quarter of economic growth that may well be forgotten by November. Now the country is too broke to afford him a second-term agenda. With record deficits instead of a surplus, he had no money to propose a new round of tax cuts or a serious plan to strengthen Social Security. Bush is like the baseball team he once owned, the Texas Rangers, who spent too much on a long-term contract for Alex Rodriguez and couldn't afford the new stars they needed to win. The difference is, the Rangers wised up and let Rodriguez go, while Bush stubbornly refuses to dump his failed tax cuts.



HOLLOW RHETORIC: Even in his State of the Union address, President Bush of empty bromides and no solutions. He dropped the Mars mission altogether and instead on athletes using steroids.

In his content-free State of the Union address, Bush showed voters just how little he can do for America by offering a second-term agenda on the cheap. The White House had hoped to soar into 2004 by proposing a manned mission to Mars. Instead, Bush looked as out of touch with ordinary Americans here on Earth as his father did when he saw that grocery scanner in 1992. The Mars speech flopped so badly that it didn't even make the cut for a State of the Union speech replete with third-string issues like steroid use in major league baseball.

The country's future, even more than its present condition, is Bush's greatest weakness and Democrats' best chance in 2004. The Democratic opportunity is simple: Americans face real problems that Democrats see and Republicans don't; Democrats offer the country real answers and Republicans don't.

Republicans have given up trying to fix that fundamental chink in Bush's armor: In the everyday lives of most Americans, more problems cry out for help than when Bush took office. Many people are clearly worse off than they were four years ago. Middle-class families face the sharpest increase in college tuition in a quarter-century. Health care costs are soaring for businesses and workers, with no end in sight. Incomes are flat and the job outlook is bleak. Most people have a bigger mortgage and a smaller nest egg. Even seniors, who were supposed to benefit from the Medicare bill, are more worried today than they were in 2000 about how they will pay for prescription drugs.

Bush hasn't just ignored the problems of ordinary people; he has added to them. By protecting privilege and shifting the tax burden from wealth to work, Bush has undermined the ethic that built the middle class: the fundamental idea that anyone who works hard and plays by the rules deserves the chance to get ahead. That speaks volumes about Bush's values—and should prove his greatest vulnerability in this campaign.

Bush's failure gives you an opportunity to define the agenda for the campaign and offer a new contract with the forgotten middle class. Your new contract should lay out how we make America safer and more respected; restore job and income growth and expand the middle class; reinforce the mainstream values of work, family, responsibility, faith, and tolerance that most Americans believe in; unify all Americans in service to each other; and launch reforms that tackle the greatest challenges our country faces.

Rule No. 4: Reform Is the Key to Results

As the nominee of the world's oldest political party, you stand to inherit a rich tradition and a pantheon of

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inspiring heroes. You remind many of Andrew Jackson, the first war hero to garner the Democratic nomination, and of John F. Kennedy, who came from your home state, won many of the same medals, and had the same initials as you.

But those aren't the shoes the Republicans want you to fill. They would prefer to fit you for the cement boots of George McGovern, Walter Mondale, and Michael Dukakis.

As the Republican attacks start pouring in, your most immediate worry will be to avoid Dukakis's most obvious mistake—not responding to attacks. Make sure every charge is answered, and answered right. But if you're going to turn the tables on Bush, you have to learn a subtler lesson from the 2000 campaign: Running on record and resume won't be enough to stop the Republican onslaught. If you want to show you're a different kind of Democrat, you need to run on a reform agenda as well.

One reason you have done so well is that you found Bush's Achilles' heel—that his administration protects privilege for the few, instead of expanding opportunity for all. You offer a positive brand of populism that doesn't just attack special interests, but presents a clear agenda to help the forgotten middle class get ahead.

As Clinton showed in 1992, if Democrats couple a populist critique with real answers to expand opportunity for all Americans, Republicans lose the argument on both counts. So Bush's White House will try to force a different argument—the one they used effectively in 2000. Time and again, Bush argued that the federal budget surplus was the people's money, not the government's, and that Democrats in Washington thought they knew better how to spend people's money than taxpayers did. Now Bush will reprise his favorite whoppers from last time around: first, that Democrats are the ones playing class warfare, and, second, that the special interest the little guy should most worry about is government.

Democrats don't have to practice class warfare this time around, because Bush has done it for them. By cutting the tax on capital gains and dividends, Bush has turned this election into a debate about values, not class. After all, as Warren Buffett has argued, a billionaire investor shouldn't pay tax at a lower rate than his secretary.

Avoiding the Republican trap on big government will be a tougher challenge. Bush's record-breaking deficits may hurt him, but that alone won't be enough for Democrats to prevail. The Gore campaign mistakenly assumed that the Clinton-Gore legacy of turning record deficits into record surpluses would blunt Bush's attacks. But old stereotypes die hard, and Bush was able to raise enough doubts to prevail among swing voters.

Without a reform component, the best Democratic ideas too often sound like big government. Democrats need to reassure the little guy that we want to fix government, not just expand it. It's not enough to keep markets and privilege in line with the values and interests of ordinary people. We need to keep government in line with those values and interests, too.

Over the years, you have built an impressive track record on reform. You pressed the Clinton White House to keep its campaign promise to put 100,000 police on the street. You supported welfare reform, even though it wasn't popular in your home state. You embraced deficit reduction in the mid-1980s, and championed education reform long before it became fashionable in Washington.

This year, you have already begun to lay the groundwork for a reform-minded campaign, with plans to control health care costs, close corporate loopholes, and increase lobbyist disclosure. You want to bolster domestic security by hiring 100,000 firefighters and stopping Bush from mothballing the 100,000 policemen program. You can outflank Bush with more reform proposals, such as giving communities the resources and responsibility to make sure every teacher in every classroom is qualified, and reforming the tax code to reward work instead of wealth.

Rule No. 5: Keep Your Eyes on the Prize

Your spectacular comeback in Iowa left you in an ideal position: You don't owe your nomination to anyone but the voters.

In the weeks to come, as you bring the entire party under your tent, you will come under increasing pressure to conform to the old party orthodoxy. We will never forget how hard it was for Clinton in 1992 to keep showing he was a different kind of Democrat when the primaries ended and all the same old Democrats climbed on board his campaign. Ironically, the pressure to conform peaks at the very moment a nominee most needs to broaden his appeal.

Democratic constituencies aren't the only ones who want you to backslide. The Bush campaign is betting that party interests will make you do it. Republicans want you to narrow your message to appeal to voters already in your camp rather than to broaden it to reach voters you can persuade and need to win. That mistake helped grab defeat from the jaws of victory in 1988 and 2000—and it would do the same damage this year.

Luckily, you know better. From the beginning, you have never forgotten that the goal isn't just winning the nomination, it's winning the election. Keep your eyes on that prize for another seven months, and it will be yours.

The American people want a president who will reform their government, not just expand it; increase their incomes, not their share of the tax burden; and make them feel more secure in these dangerous times, not more frightened. George W. Bush broke his promise to be that kind of president. It's up to you to make America's best hopes come true. ◆

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The New Nixon

George W. Bush is sacrificing the nation's long term economic health for his short term political gain—just like Richard Nixon in 1972.

| *by* **Ed Kilgore**

White House political guru Karl Rove likes to think of his boss as the political reincarnation of William McKinley, who in 1897 created a Republican majority that lasted for a generation. Many conservatives prefer the model of Ronald Reagan, the sunnily optimistic tax-cutter and defense champion. Inevitably, many parallels are also found between Bush 41 and Bush 43, especially among Democrats who like the way the first Bush presidency ended.

But as he begins his campaign for re-election, the presidency of George W. Bush bears a ghostly resemblance to that of a very different man who staked his reputation on foreign policy, pioneered the shameless use of cultural wedge issues, and gambled his country's economic future on short-term stimulus synchronized with the electoral calendar: Richard Milhous Nixon.

Nixon's political heritage has been largely obscured by the disgrace attending his forced resignation over Watergate, and the praise earned by his opening of relations with the People's Republic of China and his nonproliferation efforts with the Soviet Union. But he was, above all, a political animal, focused to an obsessive extent on creation of a "New Majority" for his party, and willing to use domestic policy as a highly calibrated strategic instrument to attract key swing voter categories—just like Bush.

Looking back on Nixon's 1972 campaign for re-election reveals an array of jarring similarities to the current president's unfolding campaign for re-election this year:

Wrapping the president in the office and the flag.

The 1972 Nixon campaign risked one of the worst acronyms in political history—CREEP, for Committee to Re-Elect the President—to endlessly hammer home the point that its chief was not just a candidate, but the president of the United States. It was the original Rose Garden campaign, deploying the president in controlled settings that displayed the trappings of his office, and sequestering him to discharge the global responsibilities that uniquely burdened him.

Nixon used his foreign policy powers—especially his diplomacy toward China and the Soviet Union and his ability to control U.S. operations in Vietnam—with a constant eye to their political impact, and to the unsettling effect they had on the opposition.

Anyone who has paid attention to Bush's campaign appearances during and after the 2002 elections has seen a refined extension of Nixon's 1972 tactics. These include the highly visible use of Air Force

Ed Kilgore is policy director of the Democratic Leadership Council. Eben Gilfenbaum provided research assistance.

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One, the frequent stops at military bases, and the constant invocation of 9/11 imagery. Bush's famous landing in a flight suit on the deck of an aircraft carrier to celebrate the military victory in Iraq was the logical extension of CREEP's exploitation of the president's role as commander in chief.

Moreover, the pervasive fear among Democrats that Bush might pull off some sort of "October surprise" in the war on terrorism—such as the capture of Osama bin Laden—is probably rooted in a tribal memory of the original "October surprise"—Henry Kissinger's misleading announcement, less than two weeks before the 1972 elections, that "peace is at hand" in Vietnam.

Targeting policies to key swing voter categories.

From the very beginning, the Nixon reelection campaign was guided by the brilliant voter analysis of Kevin Phillips, an aide to CREEP Chairman John Mitchell and author of *The Emerging Republican Majority*. It focused heavily on tailoring presidential policies to the needs of key constituencies previously aligned with Democrats, such as conservative Southern Democrats. They were the most conspicuous targets of CREEP's attentions, as reflected in the administration's Southern-tilted Supreme Court nominees, its obsessive concern with protectionist measures for the Southern textile industry, and its loud opposition to "busing" strategies for school integration.

But the Nixon strategy went much further, as the moderate Republican Ripon Society explained in its analysis of the 1972 elections: "Labor, blue-collars, ethnic groups, Catholics—all these were, in [Nixon's] opinion, his moving targets." The same is true of Bush's 2004 campaign. The CREEP also paid a lot of attention to Hispanic voters, through appointments and Spanish-language advertising, just as Bush and the Republicans are doing today.

As Karl Rove has hinted in a few Delphic utterances, Bush's domestic policies have been carefully targeted to key swing voter categories that previously leaned Democratic: No Child Left Behind is for married women with children; the Medicare prescription drug benefit is for seniors; the faith-based organizations initiative and bans on cloning research are for Catholics; and immigration reform (supplemented by high-level judicial appointments) is for Hispanics. Like Nixon, Bush expects to cut into the Democrats' Jewish vote with a conspicuous identification with an embattled Israeli government. And like Nixon, Bush plans to win culturally conservative voters with "wedge issues," including hardy perennials like abortion (which Nixon used) and guns, and new issues like gay marriage.

Sacrificing fiscal and economic policy to electoral needs.

Nixon produced not only the last balanced federal budget until President Clinton's, but the first abandonment of fiscal discipline as a keystone Republican policy. Rationalizing an election-year budget deficit, Nixon said: "What's a balanced budget worth in terms of votes? Fifty thousand votes in a national election, that's all."

Bush, of course, has consummated the burial of deficit-hawk conservatism through policies that have quickly created the largest deficits in history, both short-term and long-term. More alarmingly, Bush has followed Nixon's determination to pump up the economy in an election year, whatever the long-term consequences. In *Nixon's Economy*, his 1998 book analyzing Nixon's policies, Rice University's Allen Matusow perfectly summarizes both presidents' approaches:

"Nixon had no firm convictions on economic policy except that prosperity was essential for winning elections. ... Nixon brought in [Treasury Secretary] John Connally ... and together, these two shameless opportunists initiated the New Economic Policy, violating every tenet of the president's past belief but retrieving for him the Economic Issue before the 1972 campaign. By the president's calculus, the political benefits were worth the economic costs. Nixon's economic views, therefore, might be characterized by the phrase *après moi le deluge*."

> "Bush has echoed Nixon's **future-be-damned** approach by **packing** the stimulative effect of his **tax cuts** into the months just before the 2004 elections, while **extending the multitrillion dollar long-term cost**."

And the deluge indeed arrived. As Matusow points out, the catastrophic aftereffects of Nixon's cynical policies included oil price shocks, "stagflation," recession, and a diminishing of the U.S. quality of life.

"Bush's entire economic policy is, 'Cut taxes, raise spending, and screw the future,'" says University of Maryland political theorist William Galston.

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Bush has echoed Nixon's future-be-damned approach by packing the stimulative effect of his tax cuts into the months just before the 2004 elections, while extending the multitrillion dollar long-term cost well into the next two decades, just when the baby boom retirement will crash onto the economy.

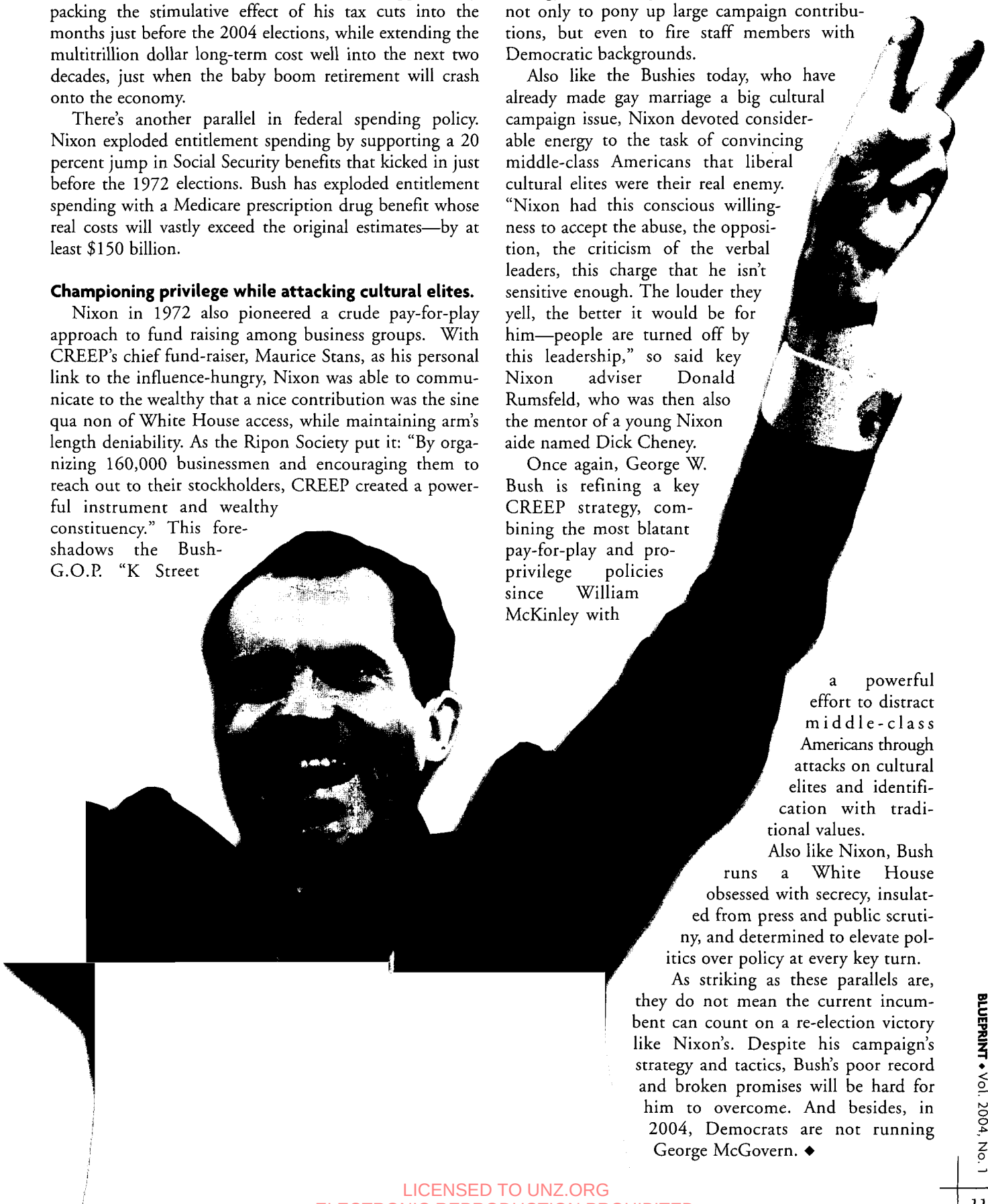
There's another parallel in federal spending policy. Nixon exploded entitlement spending by supporting a 20 percent jump in Social Security benefits that kicked in just before the 1972 elections. Bush has exploded entitlement spending with a Medicare prescription drug benefit whose real costs will vastly exceed the original estimates—by at least $150 billion.

Championing privilege while attacking cultural elites.

Nixon in 1972 also pioneered a crude pay-for-play approach to fund raising among business groups. With CREEP's chief fund-raiser, Maurice Stans, as his personal link to the influence-hungry, Nixon was able to communicate to the wealthy that a nice contribution was the sine qua non of White House access, while maintaining arm's length deniability. As the Ripon Society put it: "By organizing 160,000 businessmen and encouraging them to reach out to their stockholders, CREEP created a powerful instrument and wealthy constituency." This foreshadows the Bush-G.O.P. "K Street strategy" that strong-arms the business community, not only to pony up large campaign contributions, but even to fire staff members with Democratic backgrounds.

Also like the Bushies today, who have already made gay marriage a big cultural campaign issue, Nixon devoted considerable energy to the task of convincing middle-class Americans that liberal cultural elites were their real enemy. "Nixon had this conscious willingness to accept the abuse, the opposition, the criticism of the verbal leaders, this charge that he isn't sensitive enough. The louder they yell, the better it would be for him—people are turned off by this leadership," so said key Nixon adviser Donald Rumsfeld, who was then also the mentor of a young Nixon aide named Dick Cheney.

Once again, George W. Bush is refining a key CREEP strategy, combining the most blatant pay-for-play and pro-privilege policies since William McKinley with a powerful effort to distract middle-class Americans through attacks on cultural elites and identification with traditional values.



Also like Nixon, Bush runs a White House obsessed with secrecy, insulated from press and public scrutiny, and determined to elevate politics over policy at every key turn.

As striking as these parallels are, they do not mean the current incumbent can count on a re-election victory like Nixon's. Despite his campaign's strategy and tactics, Bush's poor record and broken promises will be hard for him to overcome. And besides, in 2004, Democrats are not running George McGovern. ◆

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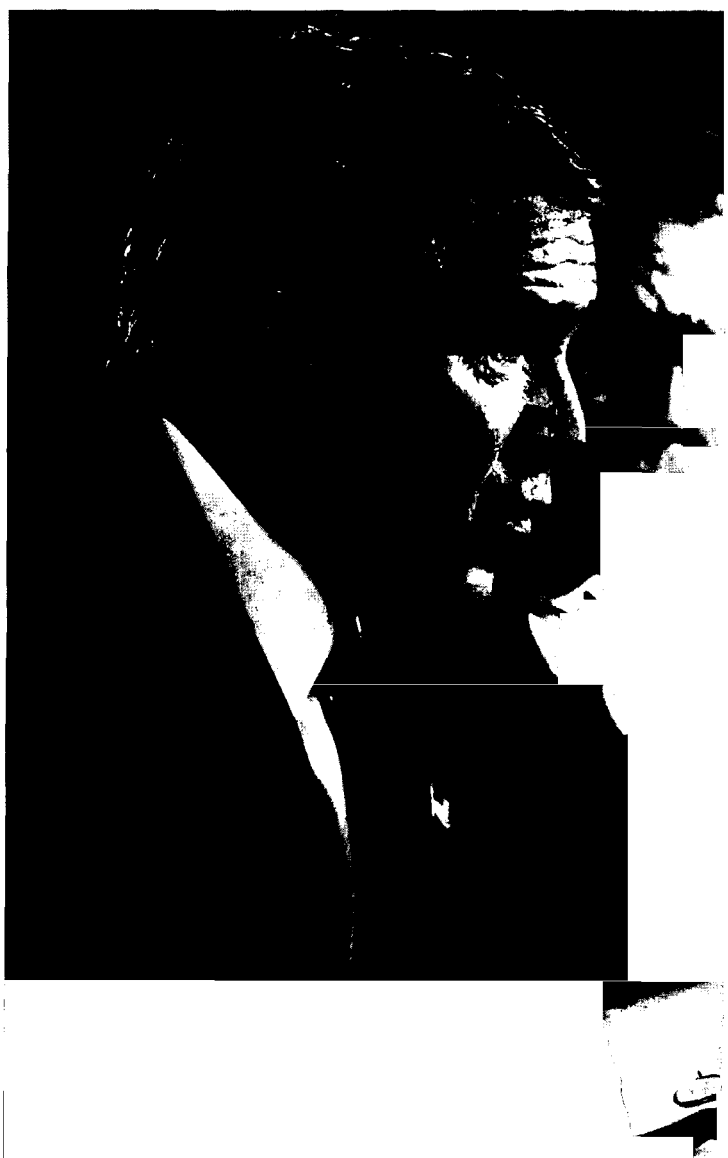
$4,000,0C

Bush is running up $4 trillion in deficits. Here's a progressive package of 55 spending cuts and government reform initiatives that will help clean up his mess.

| *by* **Paul Weinstein Jr.**



America's long-term economic health is at a crossroads. For the last three years, the Bush administration has run up a huge tab by enacting excessive tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans and the largest corporations, while increasing federal spending to levels not seen since World War II. The 7.6 percent average annual growth in the federal budget in 2002 and 2003 is more than double the 3.4 percent average between 1993 and 2001 under President Clinton. As a result, the surpluses of the 1990s have turned overnight into the largest deficits in history. The deficit is now estimated to be $477 billion in 2004, and the national debt is expected to double 10 years from now.

The Bush administration and the Republican congressional leadership have tried to hide the true costs of these deficits with accounting gimmickry and budget tricks. But the real story about America's deficit crisis is coming to light. In October 2003, at the request of centrists in the House of Representatives, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) offered a realistic assessment of the federal budget, projecting more than $4 trillion in total deficits during the next 10 years—$2.7 trillion more than the Bush administration had projected. More recently, no less an authority than Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan cited the soaring federal deficit as a potentially dangerous problem that must be addressed soon, if we are to avoid "serious longer-term fiscal difficulties."

Yet, even as the fiscal future of our government dramatically deteriorates, public perception of the serious-

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0,000,000 ... and counting

CONFIDENCE MEN: President Bush and his advisors tell tall tales about the nation's long-term economic prospects to help sell their bogus budget plans.

ness of the problem is lagging. According to one recent poll, only 3 percent of voters listed the deficit as the most important issue facing the country. And Republicans in the administration and Congress, who for decades called for balanced budgets, are now arguing that deficits aren't really important.

But deficits and the nation's rising debt *do* matter. If we do not address the structural deficits put into place by the Bush administration and the Republican Congress soon, American families will pay more in federal, state, and local taxes, higher mortgage and credit card rates, and higher fees on student loans.

The country desperately needs a progressive alternative to the administration's borrow-and-spend policies—an alternative that does not revert to the tax-and-spend policies of the pre-Clinton Democratic Party. Such an alternative is outlined in "A Return to Fiscal Responsibility: A Progressive Plan to Slash the Deficit," released in February by the Progressive Policy Institute. The PPI plan includes a list of 55 politically feasible and sound public policy proposals (see list on p. 16-17) that would slash by nearly $2 trillion the 10-year deficit projected by CBO. Among the proposals are a series of spending cuts, government reinvention ideas, budget reforms, and tax reforms that would spread the pain of deficit reduction fairly. These savings are achieved in five major areas:

1. Cutting the size of the government work force—both employees and consultants—and reducing administrative costs.
2. Reinventing key government programs and agencies, and consolidating duplicative ones.
3. Rolling back the Bush tax giveaways to the wealthiest Americans while protecting the tax cuts for middle- and low-income families.

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4. Creating a commission to reduce corporate welfare expenditures, including both tax breaks and spending programs for companies that don't need or deserve the government subsidies.
5. Restoring real budget controls, including stronger pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) rules and budget caps, as well as a constitutionally viable version of the line-item veto.

Because the Bush administration and the Republican Congress have put us so deeply into debt, this plan will not balance the budget by itself. But it is a start. If implemented, it will put America back on the road to fiscal responsibility, while not wreaking havoc with our economy. It will enable us to deal more effectively with the coming retirement of the baby-boom generation. And it will make government more efficient and responsive.

The Budget Outlook

When George Bush took office, the CBO projected budget surpluses into the foreseeable future. The federal government was expected to generate more than $5 trillion in surpluses—enough to eliminate the publicly held federal debt by 2008. That meant federal interest payments on the debt, which were running about $200 billion a year when Bush arrived, were expected to dwindle to virtually nothing by the end of this decade.

Yet within three years, our fiscal situation has deteriorated to the point of catastrophe.

In October 2003, the CBO issued a new long-term budget forecast. This realistic outlook, unlike the Bush administration's projection, assumes that all of the recent Republican tax cuts will be permanent, that Congress will continue to fix the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT), and that the conflict and reconstruction in Iraq will not disappear like magic. It concludes that America cannot simply grow its way out of debt by boosting economic output and thus reaping a windfall in tax revenue. The country, in fact, faces a long-term, structural deficit of historic proportions.

Under this realistic budget scenario, the nation's public debt will double in the next 10 years, to $8.4 trillion—even using the optimistic growth figures in the administration's budget. Furthermore, the deficit, rather than disappearing as the president has asserted, will remain over $400 billion for years to come, including a record $477 billion in red ink in the current fiscal year.

If these projections are borne out, the next 10 years are likely to rank as the most fiscally irresponsible in our nation's history. Even assuming the economy fully recovers and the costs of the war on terrorism decline more than most experts project, the federal government is on track to run sustained deficits equal to about 3.4 percent of the size of the economy. With only one exception (during the Reagan era), the federal government has never run deficits of this size, except during times of global depression or full-scale war.

BUDGET TRICKERY: Bush says his

Unfortunately, this budget deficit is not a self-correcting problem. The CBO conclusion that we cannot grow our way out of it has been corroborated in reports by government agencies such as the General Accounting Office and nonpartisan groups such as the Brookings Institution, the Concord Coalition, and Centrists.Org.

In fact, even if gross domestic product (GDP) growth averages 4 percent a year throughout the next decade (a 10-year growth rate that has not been achieved since the 1960s), the budget will remain in deficit.

It is often hard to grasp the enormous numbers associated with the current Bush administration's borrowing binges. We are facing annual federal budget deficits of one-half of $1 trillion. Few Americans ever have to deal with "trillions" of anything, so hearing such numbers may make the mind freeze. But if one breaks down the impact of deficits and the national debt on individuals and fami-

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lies, the dangers of our current fiscal recklessness become easier to understand.

The Bush Tax on Families

One way to express the cost of the deficit is to calculate the financial liability each of us must shoulder as a result of Washington's excess. According to Citizens for Tax Justice (CTJ), once the impact of the Bush tax cuts is fully phased in, the burden will amount to a tax bill of $52,000 for each family of four.

In fact, if current policies continue, interest on the public debt will rise to become larger than any of the entitlements in the U.S. budget—Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid. Interest now accounts for about 1.5 percent of GDP, down from a recent high of 3.3 percent in 1991. The decline was due in large part to the successful budget-cutting efforts of the Clinton-Gore administration in the 1990s and the budget reforms enacted by the first President Bush and the Democratic Congress in 1991. But the situation has changed dramatically. Interest is now projected to grow from today's 1.5 percent of GDP to a staggering 8 percent by 2030—an obscene burden to force on our children and grandchildren.

According to the Bush administration's rhetoric, Americans will get back, through tax cuts, most of the debt they have acquired. But that's nonsense. According to CTJ, the net negative impact of new public debt, minus tax cuts, amounts to $37,826 per family. And Bush's tax cuts are disproportionately targeted to high earners. So a typical middle-class family in the middle 20 percent of income distribution gets hit with a net bill of $42,400 through 2007. Furthermore, as the federal government continues to shift the burden for the environment, education, homeland security, and other governmental functions to the states and localities, state and property taxes will continue to rise. Many Americans are already paying more in state and local taxes and fees as a direct result of the debt-funded Bush tax cuts. But it is the long-term bill that is the real killer. Because we can't afford the Bush tax cuts, future generations will bear the burden of our deficits.

The End of Progressive Government?

If the federal deficits are not addressed, then progressive government will grind to a halt. Some libertarian conservatives may rejoice at the thought of government permanently shutting down many of its operations, particularly those aimed at promoting social welfare. But they should be chastened by the fact that when interest on the debt is the biggest expenditure in the budget, we will not be able to afford a war on terror, or a war on drugs, because we will owe too much to foreign creditors. In that future, government will have to cut every basic service or raise taxes by almost 30 percent in order to meet interest payments.

That scenario may sound preposterous, but it is not.

The Federal Reserve's aggressively low interest rates have kept federal interest outlays in check for now. But after fiscal 2005, interest payments are expected to rise rapidly—to $350 billion a year by the beginning of the next decade if we continue on our present course. By 2009, the government is likely to be spending more on interest on the debt than on any domestic discretionary program—whether education, the environment, law enforcement, science, transportation, or veterans affairs.

How will we pay for this ever-growing interest burden? The politically easy answer will be simply to borrow more. But at some point, the nation's ability to take on additional debt will become economically untenable, even for the U.S. Treasury. So at some date in the future, the government will have to balance its books. This will of course require raising taxes, or cutting spending—or both. But by how much?

Recently, three groups tried to answer that question.

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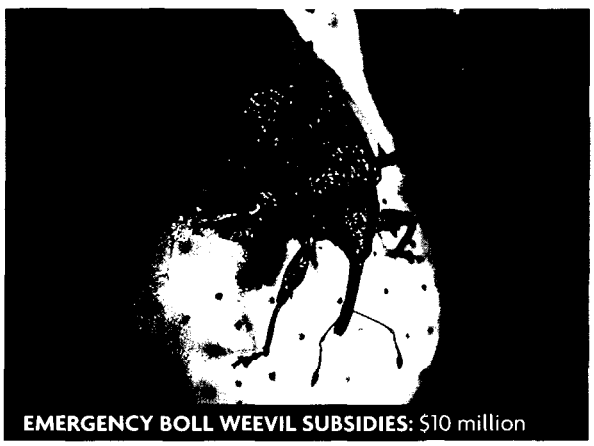
A Progressive Plan to Trim Fat from the Federal Budget

Spending Cuts	10-Year Savings ($ Millions)
Cut the Number of Political Appointees	770
Cut Congressional Staff by 10%	1,700
Cut the Non-Defense/Homeland Security Workforce by 10%	39,000
Freeze the Federal Travel Budget at $8 Billion per Year	10,000
Reduce the Number of Consultants Employed by the Federal Government by 150,000	67,000
Suspend the Acquisition of New Federal Office Space	6,000
Trim the Federal Vehicle Budget by 5%	1,000
Cut Funding For Pork Highway Projects by 50%	8,800
Cut Essential Air Service by 50%	584
Reactivate Military Base-closing Commission	24,000
Cut the Economic Development Administration Budget by 50% and Require a State/Local Match	2,600
Eliminate Taxpayer Support for Cruise Shipbuilding Industry	1,100



EMERGENCY BOLL WEEVIL SUBSIDIES: $10 million

Spending Cuts, cont.	10-Year Savings ($ Millions)
Eliminate Funding for the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center	10
Eliminate Subsidies for Special Agricultural Products—Apple Loans Program	10
Eliminate Subsidies for Special Agricultural Products—Emergency Boll Weevil Loan Program	10
Eliminate Subsidies for Special Agricultural Products—Mandatory Spending for Onion Producers	100
Eliminate Subsidies for Special Agricultural Products—Support for Wool and Mohair	187
Eliminate Subsidies for Special Agricultural Products—Loan Program for Dry Peas and Lentils	150
Eliminate Subsidies for Special Agricultural Products—Honey Support Program	101
End Payments to Wealthy Farmers	1,654
Eliminate Exchanges with Historic Whaling and Trading Partners Program	9
End "Nuclear Power 2010"	70
Subtotal	**164,855**

Government Reinvention	
Require the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs to Purchase Prescription Drugs Jointly	1,777
Repeal Pork in Medicare Drug Bill	19,900
Reform Graduate Medical Education	5,250
Create Centers of Excellence for Medicare Patients	1,500
Adjust Capital Payments to Hospitals Under Medicare	6,900
Reform Private, Supplemental Insurance for Medicare Beneficiaries	36,500
Consolidate Statistical Agencies	50
Merge the Office of Thrift Supervision and Comptroller of the Currency	120

Total Deficit Reduction: .....

The Committee for Economic Development (a group of business and education leaders), the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (a liberal-leaning research and advocacy group), and the Concord Coalition (a bipartisan organization focused on sound fiscal policy) found that if we continue to ignore our growing deficits, balancing the budget by 2013 will require raising individual and corporate income taxes by 27 percent, cutting Social Security by 60 percent, cutting defense by 73 percent, or cutting all programs—except defense, homeland security, Social Security, and Medicare—by 40 percent.

Unfortunately, the problem will only get worse after 2013, when a large percentage of the baby boom generation will be retiring and our country will be faced with $25 trillion in unfunded entitlement obligations.

Higher Interest Rates

The Bush administration wishes it were otherwise, but most of the world's top fiscal and economic experts—including Harvard's Martin Feldstein, Greenspan, and his predecessor as Federal Reserve chairman, Paul Volker—have all written that long-term deficits cause interest rates to rise. Brookings Institution economists Peter Orszag and William Gale reviewed the literature and found that 16 of

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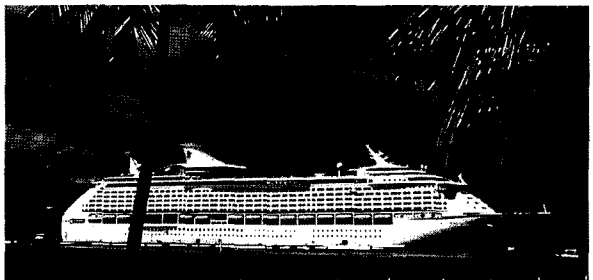
Government Reinvention, cont.	10-Year Savings ($ Millions)
Charge Federal Employees Commercial Rates for Parking	1,540
Merge National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for Humanities and Encourage Efficiencies	142



SUPPORT FOR CRUISE SHIP CONSTRUCTION: $1.1 billion

Combine the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and Export-Import Bank and Encourage Efficiencies	321
Finance the Food Safety and Inspection Service Through User Fees	7,900
End Corporate Giveaways to Commodities Industry	620
Shift Responsibilities of Foreign Agricultural Service Attachés to State Department	354
Improve the Performance of the Senior Executive Service	68
Reduce Erroneous Payments	15,000
Consolidate Non-military International Broadcasting	242
Change Pricing Structure for Military Depot Repairs	1,252
Consolidate Military Personnel Costs into a Single Appropriation	15,000
Consolidate and Encourage Efficiencies in Military Exchanges	1,750

Government Reinvention, cont.	10-Year Savings ($ Millions)
Apply Technology to Reduce the Cost of Operating Equipment	4,600
Switch to Direct Student Loans	36,000
Subtotal	**156,786**

Budget Reform	
Restore "Real" PAYGO Rules	111,700
Enact a Constitutionally Viable Line-Item Veto (Super Rescission)	5,000
Impose Discretionary Budget Caps (assumes spending is held to rate of inflation as specified by Deficit Control Act)	90,000
Enact a Corporate Subsidy Reform Commission	275,000
Subtotal	**481,700**

Tax Reform	
Close the CEO Pay Loophole	2,000
Reinstate Superfund Taxes	15,300
Increase Estate Tax Exemption to $7 million but Forego Complete Repeal	107,000
Eliminate Bush Rate Cuts For Families Making More than $200,000	315,000
Curb the Bermuda Tax Loophole	5,000
Require Companies to Explain the Differences Between the Profits They Report to Investors and Those They Report to the IRS	150,000
Curtail Tax Shelters (Grassley/Baucus)	47,000
Subtotal	**641,300**

Deficit Reduction (excluding net interest savings)	**1,444,623**
Net Interest Savings	**417,000**
	$1,861,623,000,000

17 academic studies showed a strong correlation between projected deficits and long-term interest rates.

Higher interest rates, of course, have a huge impact on family budgets. An increase in long-term interest rates of more than 2 percentage points, for example, would not *only seriously discourage new business investment* and reduce the value of the stock market, it would also mean a $3,000 increase in annual payments for a family holding a 30-year, $200,000 mortgage.

Long-Term Damage to the Economy

Clearly, the current deficit spending path, embarked on by the Bush administration and the Republican Congress, has had some stimulating impact on the economy, but at what long-term economic cost? Many economists and well-respected financiers believe the untenable budget situation is threatening the future of our economy. For example, as the *global economy recovers, U.S. deficits could cause a rise in* inflation or a rapid decline in the value of the dollar.

Furthermore, even if shortfalls in U.S. savings are offset by increased capital inflows from overseas investors, the proceeds of those foreign investments will have to be repaid in the future, with capital income flowing out of the United States instead of to domestic investors. In fact,

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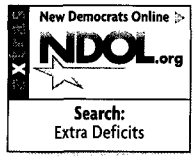
the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently released an alarming report concluding that the United States is racking up so much foreign debt that it is threatening the global economy. The IMF report warns that U.S. net financial obligations could rise to 40 percent of the country's total economy within a few years, an unprecedented level of debt for an industrial nation.



"Politics as Usual" in Washington

We are spending more today than we did three years ago for a reason: Politicians have given free range to special interests. Wasteful and unnecessary spending has been attached to legislation of national importance, such as the defense and homeland security appropriations bills—at a cost of hundreds of billions of dollars to the American taxpayer. More than 7,000 earmarks were added to the last omnibus spending bill enacted by Congress. They included such things as $100,000 for street furniture and sidewalks in Laverne, Ala.

The relationship between pork-barrel spending, special-interest influence, and higher deficits is an unhealthy cycle that can only be broken by strong political will and leadership at the top. Unfortunately, there is a short supply of both in Washington.

Putting Future Retirees at Risk

In the late 1990s, members of both parties supported the idea that we should save surpluses to meet the baby-boom retirement challenge without passing on the burden to the next generation. A key component of this generational responsibility movement was to adopt policies that increase savings and spur long-term economic productivity, so that a smaller number of workers will be able to support a larger number of future retirees without oppressive tax increases or spending cuts. Another idea was to make sure funds are available to finance the transition costs required to reform Social Security.

Unfortunately, we have lost the bipartisan support for saving Social Security and Medicare, and have instead adopted consumption-oriented policies that will force huge financial sacrifices onto our children and their children.

How bad will it be? After the baby boomers start to retire in 2008, the combination of demographic pressures and rising health care costs will result in the costs of Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security growing faster than the economy. The Concord Coalition has projected that by the time today's newborns are 40 years old, the cost of these three programs as a percentage of the economy will have more than doubled—from 8.5 percent of GDP to more than 17 percent. Combined, we are handing our children a $25 trillion unfunded liability.

So what needs to be done? The obvious answer is to immediately put into place a credible deficit reduction plan. With the economy already partially in recovery, and with the Federal Reserve committed to low-interest rates over the short term, we no longer need the stimulus of excessive spending.

It is difficult to say what is an appropriate amount of deficit reduction. But considering we have shifted from approximately $5 trillion in projected surpluses to $4 trillion in projected deficits within a period of three years, it is more than reasonable to assume we could cut the current projected deficit in half over the next 10 years—as long as the savings are focused on the right areas of the budget.

The right way to find savings in the budget is to focus on the problems that have contributed the most to the deficit:

1. Government work force and administrative expenses.
2. Pork and wasteful spending.
3. Unnecessary tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.
4. The proliferation of tax breaks for corporations and special interests.
5. Weak budget rules and accountability measures.

The table on p. 16-17 lists 55 different budget savings that, combined with net interest savings, would reduce the 10-year projected deficit by $1.85 trillion. The savings achieved would be almost equally divided among spending cuts, government reinvention, budget reforms, and tax reforms. Specifically, the savings are broken down as follows:

Spending Cuts	$164.855 billion
Government Reinvention	$156.786 billion
Budget Reform	$481.7 billion
Tax Reform	$641.3 billion
Net Savings	$417 billion
Total Savings	**$1.861 trillion**

The spending cuts are targeted heavily toward streamlining government operations. The tax reforms would only affect the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans and close corporate loopholes for those companies that are not paying their fair share. And the government reinvention initiatives are aimed at getting greater results for each tax dollar spent.

America has a choice. We can take responsibility now for our excessive spending and tax giveaways, or we can pass that responsibility onto our children and their children. This list of suggested cutbacks and reorganization of funds is a step in the right direction, but it is only a start. Due to the severity of this issue, we must begin somewhere. But if we are to finish the job, we will have to tighten our belts even further and challenge our leaders to be courageous. ◆

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Leaner, not meaner

In January, the Atkins diet empire shocked the world by warning followers to cut back on red meat. The big political story of 2004 is even more surprising: Democrats, not President Bush, are the ones taking the advice.

Not so long ago, under the spell of Dr. Howard Dean, Democrats were chowing down partisan red meat as if it were their last meal. The Bush White House, by contrast, was promising to rise above the political fray and focus on big, positive goals for the country.

Then, in a change of heart as sudden as the news from Atkins, the Iowa caucuses brought the Democratic Party to its senses. Iowa Democrats elevated two candidates, John Kerry and John Edwards, who offered a positive vision for the country, not just red-meat attacks that feed the partisan faithful but would spoil America's appetite for Democrats in November. Iowans love a good steak, but they'd prefer a good president.

The very next day, Bush delivered a State of the Union address bloated with conservative applause lines and partisan defensiveness. Bush offered the forgotten middle class a cupboard entirely bare of the big goals and new ideas they were looking for.

With his poll numbers sinking, the president relaunched his re-election campaign with another sop to the right wing: a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage. In a sign of how far Bush now finds himself from the center, some conservatives opposed the amendment, and others, such as House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, cast doubt on whether it could pass Congress. A White House that once used House Republicans as a foil to look moderate is now triangulating itself into a lonely corner on the right.

The Kerry-Bush race could give America the biggest surprise yet: a Democrat with big ideas and a winning strategy against a Republican with old ideas and an outdated one.

All last year, the press and the pundits couldn't take their eyes off the Democrats' red meat. Despite his centrist record, Gov. Dean chose to tell a frustrated party what it hungered to hear, and won the anger primary by a landslide.

What conventional wisdom and the White House missed was that while Dean kept feeding voters the same steady diet of attacks, Kerry and Edwards quietly put new ideas on the table that middle-class voters found far more satisfying. Kerry staunchly defended middle-class tax cuts, and offered plans to hold down health care costs, make America energy independent within 10 years, and increase national service tenfold. Edwards proposed a free year of college for those willing to work, a sweeping plan to reduce poverty, a domestic intelligence agency, and middle-class tax reform to reward work, not wealth.

Bush's menu of ideas pales by comparison. The Bush second-term agenda shows all the hallmarks of an administration deep in debt and more concerned with outer space than with the down-to-earth concerns of ordinary Americans. He used his State of the Union address to wave the conservative flag on terrorism and taxes, rather than to put forward new answers. Bush calls himself "a war president," but on the stump, he sounds more like a culture-war president, touring the front from abortion to human cloning to gay marriage.

George W. Bush has spent the past four years mortgaging America's future with tax cuts for the wealthy, because he thinks his father lost the presidency over failing to tend his conservative base. Yet despite almost four years of care and feeding, the right wing seems hungrier than ever, and Bush is still trapped in the lion's den with them.

That leaves Democrats to learn the true lesson of the first Bush's demise: Except for national security, he had nothing to offer. In 1992, Republicans tried to run the same negative campaign they had run in 1988. Americans decided they were tired of a president whose response to every problem was, "Sorry, no answer. Ask again later."

This year, voters already show signs of political combat fatigue. A recent poll conducted by Democrats Tom Freedman and Bill Knapp and Republican Jim McLaughlin found that in deciding their vote for president, 78 percent of Americans would rather hear a candidate's plan for fighting poverty, while just 15 percent want to hear where the candidate stands on gay marriage.

As the campaign wears on and GOP attacks intensify, it will take great willpower to avoid taking the Republican bait. Like any new diet, this one will only work if Democrats stick with it.

But if Democrats can remember that voters crave ideas, not attacks, the party will be in fighting trim come November. Republicans have too soon forgotten what Democrats—like the Atkins diet—finally got right: In the end, all that red meat doesn't make you stronger. It just makes you feel old. ◆

➢ **Bruce Reed**, President Clinton's former domestic policy adviser, is president of the DLC.

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Environmental armistice

It's time for eco-warriors and industry to realize that their interests don't make them mortal enemies. In fact, they have a lot to gain from working together.

> *by* **Kathleen A. McGinty**

It is time to finally dispel the tired notion that environmental protection comes at the cost of economic growth. The idea that business success is somehow incompatible with sustainable environmental policies is a myth. In fact, properly balanced, they are mutually reinforcing. Good environmentalism leads to good business. And the reverse is true, too: Businesses hurt their bottom lines by working to roll back environmental protections, and environmentalists damage the environment by declaring all-out war on business. That's why we need to call a truce between warring parties on both extremes and pursue approaches that protect both our environment and our economic growth.

Of course, there are some cases that are black and white and require stringent action. At the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, we recently shut down a landfill that was so woefully out of compliance that our inspectors had to be on site more than 700 times in just a few months. We are also seeking record damages against another company that has violated environmental laws for 20 years.

But such black-and-white cases are the exception, not the rule. The real challenge is to create winners in complicated gray areas, where strident, noncompromising positions create losers all around. During my service in the Clinton administration, I learned that the best way to approach such problems is to bring business representatives, environmental groups, government officials, and average citizens to the table. Tapping the judgment of people with different mindsets, different skill sets, and different points of view generates considered reflection, not combative slogans. Working together in this way is not easy, but it is the only way to move forward.

Today, such sensible compromise seems to have been thrown out the window, especially by the Bush administration. In the current polarized national debate over environmental quality and energy security, it is dismaying—but not surprising—to see business and environmental groups retreating to their old, entrenched positions. They are, sadly, encouraged in this approach by the absolutist and extremist stance of the White House. It is time to come back to the sensible and sustainable center.

For starters, American industry should examine examples of what happens when it dogmatically opposes new environmental protections. One case in point is the demise of U.S. steel manufacturers. Although some are making a tenuous comeback, American steelmakers for years hemorrhaged market share and jobs. Among the many factors leading to the industry's decline was persistent and fierce resistance to pollution controls. In the 1970s, smog in steelmaking towns was sometimes so bad that workers had to drive with their headlights on in the daytime. Yet for years, steel producers fought the mandatory installation of equipment to filter smog and other impurities from their furnaces. Firms argued that such improvements would force mills to close and cost steelworkers their jobs.

But the opposite was true. By adopting new, more efficient manufacturing methods, the steelmakers could have saved money and cleared the air at the same time. That's what their competitors in Japan and South Korea did. They eagerly adopted newer, cleaner technologies, reducing the amount of fuel and other inputs they needed to forge steel. This simultaneously lowered the amount of waste products their mills released into the air, the soil, and the water. By moving with the technological curve of environmental protection, they achieved better products, lower costs, greater market share—and an improved environment. Japan and other countries soon moved ahead of U.S. steel producers in world markets.

A similar story is about to be written in the automobile industry, if American carmakers fail to lead the charge to build cleaner vehicles that get better gas mileage. While U.S. automakers work to oppose greater fuel efficiency standards in Congress, Japanese manufacturers have already introduced a new generation of environmentally friendly vehicles running on hybrid-gas-and-electricity engines and report brisk sales. Ford and General Motors are introducing their versions only in 2004.

Instead of wasting millions of dollars to combat new emissions and mileage standards, the U.S. automobile industry should embrace new efficiency standards and make this country a market leader.

America also will fall behind if our government continues to stonewall the effort to reduce greenhouse gases. We should be leading the debate on this critical issue, rather than running scared. President Bush's abdication of leadership in this regard, despite his seemingly pro-business rhetoric, is no

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GOING TO EXTREMES: Activists have often approached environmental debates with a siege mentality. These demonstrators built a fortified encampment to block loggers from Oregon's Willamette National Forest in 1996.

favor to American business or economic security. American industry will be eclipsed by Asian and European companies who are out in front, writing the rules, and creating the tools to reduce greenhouse gases.

Similarly, however, environmentalists should drop the argument that industry is an enemy to all environmental advancement. Environmentalists who promote a my-way-or-the-highway approach to protection are a hindrance, not a help, to environmental progress.

Remember the spotted owl controversy? True enough, our national forests had been mismanaged and severely overharvested for decades. As a consequence, the owl lost its vital habitat, and its days were numbered.

For some environmentalists, the only pure and true strategy to save the owl was to stop timber harvests. That strategy backfired for two compelling reasons. First, by putting the brakes on logging, the environmental lobby turned timber workers into determined enemies rather than devoted allies. In an effort to save owls, environmentalists also, in essence, wrote pink slips for thousands of timber workers and issued death certificates for entire timber-dependent towns. A more reasoned approach would have forged partnerships with these workers to save owls and timber industry jobs simultaneously by ensuring that there would always be a viable supply of trees to harvest.

Second, stopping timber harvests was ecologically unsound. Scientists tell us that the "don't touch a stick" approach means that forests will become choked with weeds and invasive species. Once managed, forests always need to be managed. They should be managed to enhance ecological values, not just to enhance timber production and commercial value, as too often has been the case in our nation's history and, unfortunately, as the Bush administration is doing now. But environmentalists lost ground in this debate by pursuing a needlessly divisive and scientifically questionable approach.

The tendency among some environmental groups to gratuituously demonize the other side also threatens to alienate America's farmers. Some environmental groups seek to shut down large-scale farms because of their environmental impacts—runoff of manure, soil, and pesticides, as well as air pollution from densely concentrated feedlots. They champion an appealing but economically unrealistic vision of small, yeoman farmers as the model of economic and environmental efficiency.

Are large-scale farmers really the environmental villains they are made out to be? This industry must be regulated—and the Bush administration is wrong to roll back air and water pollution limits that the Clinton administration applied to these operations. But large farms also have the distinct advantage of being well capitalized. They can afford the technology to curb runoff and emissions as well as to adopt better management practices that improve the bottom line. By contrast, financially strapped smaller farming operations struggle mightily in this regard and, in fact, are largely exempt from environmental requirements as a consequence.

Barely viable small farms must either grow, sell out to larger farms, or sell out to developers—making today's farm tomorrow's Wal-Mart. Rather than driving farmers off the land—and thereby bringing on the terrible ecological loss of destroyed open space and habitat—a better approach might be to bring technology to bear on the specific environmental problems that large-scale farms present. In Pennsylvania, for example, we're bringing together farmers and environmentalists to support the deployment of biodigesters that keep manure out of streams, eliminate odors, and clean up the air by generating renewable energy.

No one has a lock on the environmental truth, an area where cause and effect are often highly uncertain. Trust lies somewhere among the shared experiences and insights that a variety of people bring to the table. Environmental progress demands more than fanatical devotion to a single presumed truth; it requires that the wisdom found in diversity be sought out and embraced. And economic leadership means seeing the future and helping to shape it rather than crouching, slouching, fighting, and hiding. By working as partners, we can achieve a sustainable future. ◆

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Tailpipe revolution

Stop stalling! Instead of haggling over CAFE standards and a distant hydrogen future, we should use strong market incentives like tailpipe emissions trading to put more clean cars on the road today.

> *by* **Roger Ballentine** *and* **Jan Mazurek**

Tailpipe exhaust from cars, trucks, and increasingly popular sport utility vehicles is a leading source of air pollution in the United States. It accounts for roughly one-third of the nation's emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2), a key contributor to global warming. But the main tool Congress uses to curtail tailpipe emissions—corporate average fuel efficiency (CAFE) standards—wasn't properly designed for the job.

Lawmakers created CAFE standards in response to the energy crisis of the 1970s to save *oil*, not the environment. So the CAFE debate, which repeats itself on Capitol Hill with Groundhog Day regularity but only frustrating results, is really just about the input side of the equation—miles per gallon. How much fuel should vehicles be allowed to consume in order to travel a given distance?

To curb emissions more effectively, the law should instead focus on the other side of the equation—vehicles' output: How much tailpipe exhaust can the environment handle? California enacted a law with that approach in 2002. It could serve as a model for the nation.

The California law sets benchmarks for the total acceptable volume of greenhouse gas emissions from tailpipes. Federal policymakers can take that approach one step further. They should create an economic incentive for auto manufacturers to innovate and improve fuel efficiency by establishing a tailpipe emissions credit-trading system. Under such a system, automakers would be rewarded with credits when their vehicles surpass baseline standards. They would be able to generate extra revenue by selling those credits to carmakers whose emissions are too high. Manufacturers whose models don't meet baseline standards would *have* to buy those credits, or pay fines to the government.

Either way, in a "tailpipe-trading" system, inefficient vehicles would lose profits, and the overall environmental objective—a set level of total emissions—would be achieved.

The CAFE system of the 1970s has, of course, produced important environ-

PROFIT LOSS: In a tailpipe emissions trading system, the manufacturer of this car would have plenty of incentive to design a more environmentally friendly engine.

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mental benefits; burning less fuel means releasing lower levels of carbon and other harmful pollutants. But today's comparatively stable oil supply and low gas prices have undermined consensus for tough action to reduce consumption. Lawmakers are often reluctant to ratchet up miles-per-gallon requirements because automakers complain that CAFE standards require costly trade-offs in vehicle performance and safety and force them to build vehicles consumers don't want.

Little wonder that after the latest CAFE debate, Congress rejected a proposal that would have significantly raised vehicle fuel-efficiency standards for the first time in decades. This, despite war in the Middle East, ongoing threats from terrorists, and continuing problems with the undemocratic Arab regimes we depend on for most of our foreign oil. Instead, in a display of daunted courage, Congress is poised to direct the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to study the issue.

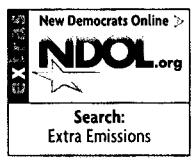
Meanwhile, President Bush has cast his lot solely with promising, but still-distant, hydrogen technology as a replacement fuel for oil. He has completely abdicated his responsibility for the near-term problem by refusing to tackle fuel economy and tailpipe emissions head-on.

Congress and the administration should do more to make use of available technologies that American taxpayers have helped fund over the past decade—such as alternative fuels and hybrid-electric engines that can dramatically increase fuel efficiency. But we must provide the right incentives to ensure they are widely adopted. These technologies make it possible to give consumers the cars they want, while reducing oil consumption *right away.*

If history is any guide, the auto industry will at first resist a major policy shift. But it would be in U.S. carmakers' own interest to move faster to embrace the challenge of leading the world in the development and deployment of advanced and clean vehicles. The Japanese and German auto industries have seen the writing on the wall and are rushing to get ahead of the fuel-efficiency curve, starting with hybrid cars. Keeping the U.S. market sheltered from fuel-efficiency trends would be shortsighted protectionism.

> "Congress should also **assign** NHTSA and the Environmental Protection Agency **the task of developing** the testing protocols and **standards** that will be necessary to completely phase in a **tailpipe-trading** program."

Instead, the United States should press forward quickly with a bold strategy to begin dramatically reducing our costly dependence on oil, to clean our air, and to help build a stronger and more modern U.S. auto industry. We should:



1. Phase out our current fuel economy regulations and shift to a carbon tailpipe reduction standard that allows tailpipe trading to reward companies that bring cleaner cars to market.
2. During the transition to a new system, close ill-conceived loopholes, such as standards that let SUVs get lower fuel economy than passenger vehicles because they are classified as "light trucks."
3. Create new tax incentives that are performance-based, technology-neutral, and big enough to entice both manufacturers and consumers to adopt "clean cars" that burn less fuel or run on alternatives such as bio-diesel fuels.

Such a strategy is fully detailed in a report from the Progressive Policy Institute (available at www.ppi-online.org). It would effectively apply California's path-breaking approach to the rest of the country. It would also allow us to make real progress in addressing climate change—despite the Bush administration's contorted back-flips on the issue.

Creating a tailpipe-trading system would not require many changes in the existing CAFE program, because the system already gives manufacturers credits from the federal government that they can bank and save in case their fleets fall short of future standards. Tailpipe trading would simply take the banking provision one step further; it would allow manufacturers to trade not only among themselves but also with petroleum producers, once Congress passes and the president signs a system to make CO_2 reduction mandatory. The Climate Stewardship Act, proposed in January 2003 by Sens. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.), serves as a good model for an extended nationwide trading system.

Lawmakers certainly should support robust research into hydrogen power for the long term, including significant federal investments in fuel cell technology, hydrogen production, transportation, and storage, and the training of a skilled work force to run a future hydrogen economy. But in the near term, Congress should also assign NHTSA and the Environmental Protection Agency the task of developing the testing protocols and standards that will be necessary to completely phase in a tailpipe-trading program. If new standards and protocols are properly implemented, we can smoothly shift to a new and simpler regime that will help deliver tomorrow's cars to today's consumers. ◆

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Help wanted

Urban school districts need quality teachers, but hiring policies make it too difficult to land top talent.

> *by* **Andrew J. Rotherham** *and* **Jessica Levin**

Contrary to conventional wisdom, high-quality teacher candidates are not out of reach for large urban school systems. But tapping into this talent pool requires a more ambitious approach to hiring. Urban school districts suffer from a shortage of qualified teachers in such critical areas as math, science, and special education. But they could go a long way toward solving the problem by retooling hiring practices and making job offers just a few months earlier—before the best candidates are locked into new jobs elsewhere.

That's the conclusion of a recent study by The New Teacher Project (TNTP), a nonprofit organization committed to working with schools to improve teacher recruitment and retention. The study, "Missed Opportunities: How We Keep High-Quality Teachers Out of Urban Classrooms," examined hiring practices in four large and representative urban school districts. It found that hundreds, if not thousands, of top-notch candidates want to teach in these high-need districts, but ultimately don't, because they don't receive job offers until mid- to late summer, several months after the most promising applicants have already agreed to take jobs in other school districts.

Blame the bureaucrats? Not necessarily. According to the study, state and local hiring requirements, union policies, and budget timetables are the real culprits. Together, they conspire to slow down the hiring process and keep highly qualified teaching candidates away. The solution lies in revamping these policies so that local school officials can hire new teachers by May of the previous school year.

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Losing the War for Teacher Talent

Too often, urban school districts define the success of their teacher-hiring seasons in singular terms: "Did we fill our vacancies?" These school districts don't believe they have the luxury of focusing on high-quality teacher candidates, so scant attention is paid to the quality of individual applicants. That's unfortunate because, as TNTP found, many good candidates are interested in these jobs, but they won't wait indefinitely for offers to materialize.

Through targeted recruitment strategies, all four urban school districts in the study were able to generate more applications than they had actual vacancies—in one case, up to 20 for every available position. The others received between five and seven applications for each vacancy. Up to 37 percent of these candidates applied to teach in high-need subjects, such as math, science, special education, and bilingual education.

However, because these school districts failed to make job placement offers until mid- to late summer, one-third to more than one-half of the applicants had already withdrawn from the hiring process. A majority of those who withdrew cited the lateness of the job offers as a reason for taking other positions, and about one-half said they would have "definitely or probably" accepted an offer from the urban school district if it had come earlier. Equally disturbing, these were among the most qualified candidates. They had significantly higher grade-point averages than the candidates who were eventually hired. They were 40 percent more likely to have degrees in their teaching fields. And from 37 percent to 69 percent of them, among the four districts, were candidates for hard-to-fill positions, such as math and science.

Teacher Hiring: Three Primary Policy Issues

School administrators don't deserve

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IN DEMAND: Good teachers can choose from scores of job offers. Urban schools must learn to move faster to sign quality candidates.

all the blame for letting the best teaching candidates fall through the cracks. In the four districts studied and, in fact, in large urban school districts across the country, three elements of the teacher-hiring process tie the hands of even the most determined administrators, complicating their efforts to hire more effectively.

• Vacancy notification requirements allow retiring or resigning teachers to provide last-minute notice of their departures. Three of the four districts in the study had either a summer notification deadline for departing teachers or no deadline at all. Such late notice requirements make it difficult to forecast vacancies for the next school year and nearly impossible to offer early placements—a must for the highest caliber and most in-demand candidates.

• Teachers' union transfer requirements grant incumbent teachers first pick of any new openings. Timetables outlined in union contracts can delay these transfer decisions for a few months, or, in some cases, until just weeks or days before schools reopen. Policies negotiated during collective bargaining that require schools to hire transferring and "excessed" teachers create additional complications; principals fear being forced to accept a transferring teacher they don't want and are therefore reluctant to post new vacancies.

• Late budget timetables and inadequate forecasting fuel budget uncertainty and leave administrators unsure about which positions in their schools will be funded. State budget time lines are the major problem. In 46 states, the fiscal year does not end until June 30. Even then, states may not need to pass a budget if they seek an extension.

What Can School Districts and States Do?

To compete for the best new talent, large urban school systems need to overhaul their hiring policies so that they can be in a position to hire and place new teachers by the beginning of May. That means local school districts will have to examine collective bargaining agreements, memoranda of understanding, and other arrangements to make sure these policies don't work at cross-purposes with teacher-hiring efforts. They must work with teachers' unions to ensure early notification by resigning or retiring teachers.

Likewise, they should revamp their collective bargaining agreements with an eye toward speeding up the teacher transfer process and giving external candidates a fair and early shot at new vacancies. And, to help all school districts, state policymakers need to work with superintendents to move up budget timelines that create uncertainty or, at a minimum, offer better and timelier budget forecasting to help with planning.

The good news is that the problems identified in the TNTP study are solvable, and fixing them won't require new funding. Given the strong and proven connection between teacher quality and student learning, addressing these problems will pay substantial and immediate dividends, particularly for poor and minority students who are most adversely affected. Effective teachers are the single most important school-based determinant of students' academic growth. We simply can't improve struggling schools without them.

It's past time for urban districts to overhaul their teacher hiring practices and do what is necessary to hire—rather than lose—their best teaching candidates.◆

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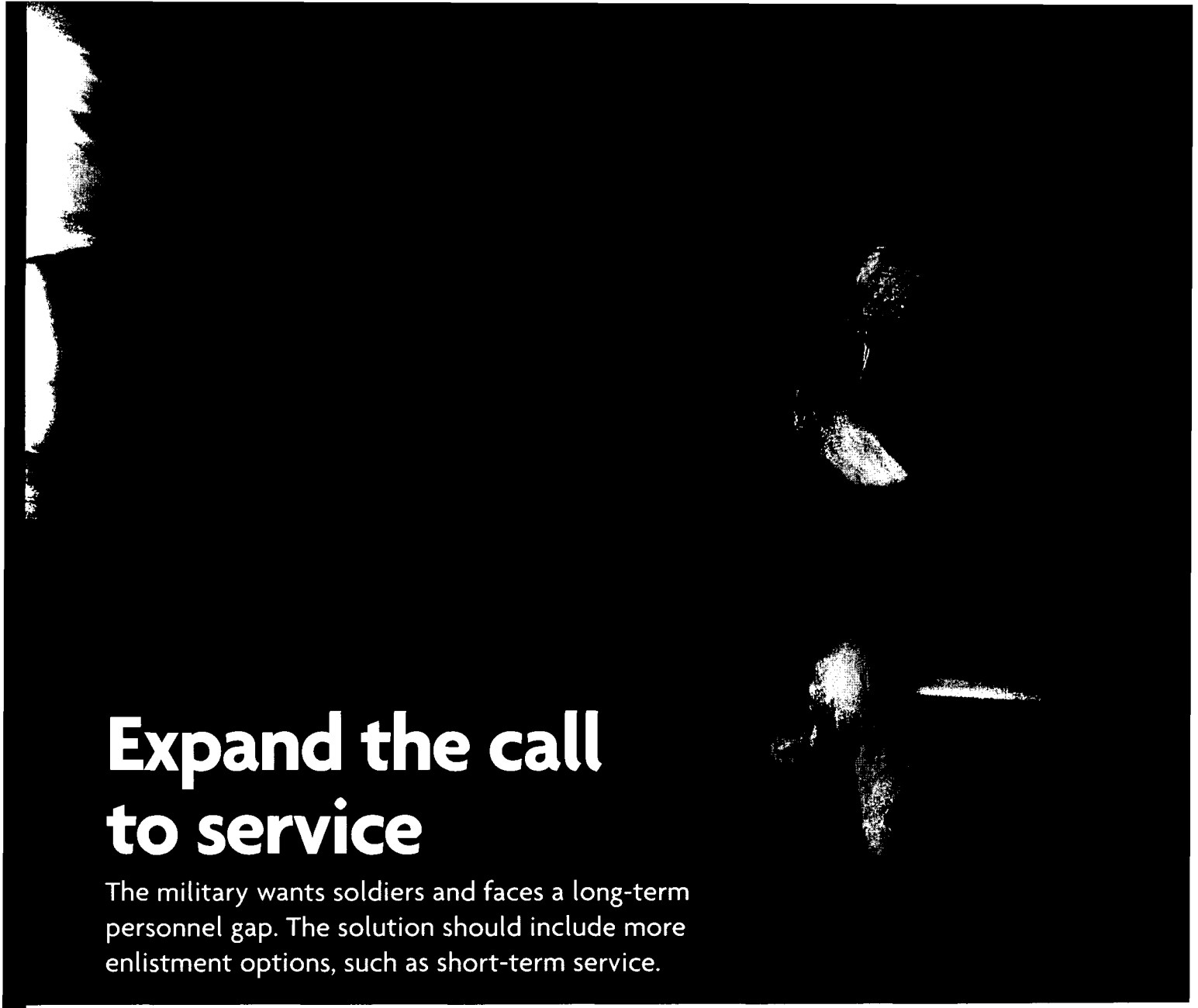

Expand the call to service

The military wants soldiers and faces a long-term personnel gap. The solution should include more enlistment options, such as short-term service.

> *by* **Marc Magee** *and* **Steven J. Nider**

When Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld invoked emergency powers in January and authorized the Army to temporarily increase its ranks by 30,000 soldiers over the next four years, he fanned the flames of an already hot policy debate about the size and force structure of the post-9/11 U.S. military.

Despite ongoing operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other terrorist havens around the world, Rumsfeld had previously resisted increasing the military's ranks, arguing instead for reorganizing existing forces. His about-face—a new policy that focuses on solving what he said were short-term needs by issuing temporary orders to prevent soldiers from retiring in a time of war—was nonetheless a tacit admission that the military does need to grow if it is to fulfill all of its new missions.

Meanwhile, Democrats on Capitol Hill, led by Rep. Ellen Tauscher (D-Calif.), have been pushing for a more permanent solution to what they believe will be the military's long-term needs in the war on terror. They have been calling for an 8 percent force expansion that would require not only new legislation authorizing a personnel increase, but also innovative approaches to bring more young Americans into military service in those areas with the greatest needs: infantry, military police, medicine, engineering, and transportation.

The Democrats are right to push for more personnel in addition to a clearly needed restructuring of existing forces. But for the Democrats' force expansion efforts to be successful they must look beyond traditional approaches to military recruitment. In October, the mili-

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tary began taking in the first recruits through a new National Call to Service enlistment program that is the most significant change in recruiting since the creation of the all-volunteer force. This approach should be an integral part of our long-term efforts to close the military's growing manpower gap.

The National Call to Service program enables volunteers to sign up for 15 months of service on active duty followed by 24 months in the reserves—a radical departure from the four- and five-year active duty enlistments that are now the norm. First proposed by Sens. Evan Bayh (D-Ind.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.) in their Call to Service Act of 2001, the program is designed to help meet our growing personnel demands by offering America's youth a voluntary equivalent of the draft: a way to serve their country in uniform in a time of need without choosing a military career. By assigning short-term citizen-soldiers to high-demand military occupations that require shorter training periods, the program offers the promise of addressing critical personnel shortages while also sharing wartime sacrifice more broadly throughout society.

Evidence of early successes among the first 600 recruits, in a class that will reach 3,600 by the end of this year, suggests that the program is already beginning to fulfill its promise. The short-term program has a higher percentage of college-educated and college-bound enlistees than traditional enlistment programs; it is providing immediate relief to the active-duty military positions experiencing the greatest manpower shortages; and it is on track to deliver experienced soldiers into a reserve force that has been stretched thin by frequent mobilizations since 9/11.

Until now, broadening the military's recruiting base to include more young Americans with college experience has been a particularly frustrating challenge. In the traditional career-track enlistment programs, only about 6 percent of enlistees have any college education. But 27 percent of the initial recruits to the National Call to Service program have attended college. This successful demographic expansion of the military recruiting pool will help ensure that we can meet more ambitious overall recruiting targets, while also sharing the burden of service more widely and equitably.

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A key test for the program will be its ability to bring more young Americans into those military jobs that are suffering the greatest manpower shortfalls. It bodes well that the program's first graduates from basic training are now serving almost exclusively in the positions with the greatest need. The Armed Services are also beginning to see advantages in the program beyond the initial help in recruiting for the active duty force. "You're not only getting the 15 months of active-duty time, you're also getting the 24 months in the reserves," said Frank Shaffery, assistant chief of staff for operations at the Army's recruiting command. "You're accomplishing two missions at the same time." This could prove particularly important in coming years as recruitment and retention of reserve personnel is strained by constant mobilizations.

The National Call to Service program's initial results point to the power of policies grounded in the progressive tradition of active citizenship and mutual responsibility. But there is still a long way to go before the program is truly an integral part of our efforts to close the military's manpower gap. The Bush administration has shown little interest in it. The president signed the defense authorization bill that established the program, but he never endorsed the initiative and has done nothing since its inception to facilitate a robust implementation. In fact, the centerpiece of his wartime citizen mobilization efforts—the Freedom Corps service initiative—doesn't mention a military service option at all.

Without direction from the commander-in-chief, Pentagon leadership capped the number of positions in the first year of the National Call to Service program at 3,600 recruits—less than 2 percent of all enlistments in the coming year. The first class of recruits is big enough to demonstrate the effectiveness of this national service approach, but a much larger program is needed if we are to meet the challenges ahead. So as Democrats move forward in developing a permanent solution to the military's manpower gap, the National Call to Service program deserves to be a central part of their plans. ◆

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Europe's old disease returns

Militant Islamists are forming a twisted alliance with Europe's left to spread virulent anti-Semitism that targets both Jews and America.

> *by* **Fred Siegel**

One of the few certainties of the 20th century was that the apostles of Marxist materialism and the adherents of Muslim theocracy were mortal enemies. In Afghanistan, they went to war. But that was the 20th century.

In the new era, Communist red and Islamist green, joined by more than a dash of Nazi brown, have increasingly forged an anti-liberal alliance that sees Israel and the United States as its common enemies. They all believe, in different ways, that if only the United States and Israel could be destroyed, the world could return to the idyllic harmony that prevailed before Jewish capitalism polluted it.

On both sides of the English Channel, left-wing intellectuals are creating new alliances to promote anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism in the guise of radical politics. This revived and virulent outbreak of an old disease, anti-Semitism, should alarm anyone concerned with the two regions of greatest importance to the United States today, Europe and the Middle East.

What's different about this new outbreak is that it's not only afflicting the usual suspects on the right: neo-Nazis, skinheads, and ultra-nationalists. Rather, it features an unholy marriage of the discredited old European left and the disaffected Islamist militants in Europe's diaspora of 17 million Muslims. It is also tethered to rising anti-Americanism, adding to its potency and making it a double danger to Western values. Left unchecked, the new scourge can undermine key relationships like the trans-Atlantic alliance and contribute to the quotient of world terrorism.

The key political vehicle for the new outbreak of anti-Semitism in Europe is support for the Palestinian position against Israel. As noted by Gabriel Schoenfeld in *The Return of Anti-Semitism*, there's a twisted logic in the European and American left-wing hostility to Israel: The more terrorism committed by the Palestinians, the more sympathy they receive, because vicious attacks on Israeli citizens are taken as ex post facto proof of Israeli oppression.

Starting in October 2000—the beginning of the second intifada—the number of anti-Semitic incidents, statements, and media characterizations in Europe has risen steadily. In France, for instance, 20 Jewish schools and synagogues have been targets of arson or firebombing in the past three years. In Germany, anti-Semitic incidents—including speech—rose from 150 in 2001 to 1,594 in 2002.

Worse, the new anti-Semitism has acquired a new respectability—a kind of "salon anti-Semitism" that is found among "left-liberal elites in the media, churches, universities and trades unions," as University of Essex lecturer Paul Iganski has noted. Being opposed to Israeli policy has become an easy excuse for being opposed to Jews; and, after 9/11 and the U.S.-led war on terror, opposing U.S. policy easily slid into being anti-American (and anti-Americanism is often a cover for anti-Semitism, as we shall see). The anti-Semitic trend had become alarming enough by early 2002 that the European Union commissioned a report on the problem.

The EU's controversial report, "Manifestations of Anti-Semitism in the European Union," landed like a bombshell. It noted that some of the insults, attacks, and acts of vandalism (against synagogues, schools, and cemeteries) came from the usual suspects on the right, and that some of the violence was committed by young, poor Arabs. But it fingered two other groups: Europe's left and militant Islamists.

Delivered in late 2002, the EU report was immediately shelved, left unpublished, and put under wraps. Only after the 105-page document was leaked to the press in 2003 and was posted on Daniel Cohn-Bendit's Web site, were the reasons clear: EU officials feared that it was politically incorrect to blame Muslims, and old lefties, for something so long associated with fascism, Nazis, and the far right.

But the bureaucrats needn't have worried. The players themselves are making the newfound dalliance between left-wing red and Islamist green plain enough, and public enough, that only the blind cannot see what is happening. In Britain, noted members of the press and political establishments have not shied from anti-Semitic utterances in heated times. Jenny Tonge, a Liberal Democratic member of Parliament, announced that she found the Israelis so beastly that if she were a Palestinian, she "too would become a suicide bomber." Tam Dalyell, a senior Labor politician and Parliament's longest-serving member, decried the influence of what he called a "Jewish cabal" on British foreign policy (several of Prime Minister Tony Blair's advis-

▸ **Fred Siegel,** a professor at The Cooper Union, is culture editor of BLUEPRINT.

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GLY SIGNS: Europe has seen a new wave of anti-Semitic attacks. Many come from the ight, but others from a new generation of disaffected Muslims. Now Europe's old left is art of this anti-liberal alliance.

ers, including the foreign secretary, are of Jewish descent).

The leading left-leaning British media, too, have kept up a steady stream of commentary, reporting, and actions with an anti-Semitic tinge. The BBC, which has contractual and personnel ties with the Arab satellite broadcaster, Al-Jazeera, was quick last January to fire Robert Kilroy-Silk, a longtime television commentator who wrote a newspaper column asking why Westerners should admire societies that, among other things, produce "suicide bombers, limb amputators, women repressors." But the BBC didn't even bother to censure Tom Paulin, another network commentator who, in an interview with an Egyptian newspaper, said that "Brooklyn-born Jews" living on the West Bank "should be shot dead."

In arguments once made mainly by the Nazis or the Muslim Brotherhood, the *Guardian* and *Independent* newspapers regularly depict the United States as under the sinister control of the Jewish lobby. Typical of this trope is a piece by Robert Fisk in a 2002 edition of the *Independent*. Fisk argued, at 3,600-word length, that Jewish money essentially controls the U.S. Congress.

And last year, the *Independent* showed how far it is willing to go by publishing a gruesome cartoon of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon about to eat the head of a Palestinian baby—a play on the historical libel that Jews killed and ate Christian babies. The cartoonist said the caricature was a parody of a ghoulish Goya painting—but the average reader had no way of knowing this. The drawing won first prize in Britain's annual cartoon competition, triggering ferocious controversy.

Across the Channel in France, a surge of anti-Semitic incidents accompanied the growing violence in Palestine and Israel after the rejection, in 2001, of President Clinton's peace plan. Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin—his eyes then firmly planted on the forthcoming elections—responded to the arson of a synagogue with the comment that the French police could hardly be expected to protect Jews wherever they went. President Jacques Chirac, a longtime ally and business associate of Saddam Hussein, insisted that "there is no anti-Semitism and no anti-Semites in France."

The official line, echoed by virtually every French politician, was that the attacks were just juvenile delinquency. But as the violent anti-Jewish incidents mounted and France came under American and Israeli pressure, Chirac eventually acknowledged the existence of a problem. Still, he could not bring himself to directly criticize the thuggery behind the violence, much of it perpetrated by Muslim youths. Chirac eventually won the election, but not until the far right candidate, Jean-Marie Le Pen, and the far left parties, including Trotskyites, received a combined total of 43 percent of the vote in the election's first round.

The most dramatic example of the conjoining of the hard left and Middle East extremism can be found in a French prison—in the person of Carlos the Jackal, the most famous terrorist of the 1970s. Born Illich Ramirez Sanchez in Venezuela, Carlos led numerous terrorist attacks in the name of the Palestinian cause and other revolutionary undertakings; he is now serving a life sentence. Once a convinced Marxist-Leninist, he has converted to Islam on the grounds that "only a coalition of Marxists and Islamists can destroy" the United States and its allies. In a book he managed to sneak out of prison and publish on the first anniversary of 9/11, Carlos lauds Osama bin Laden and praises "revolutionary Islam" as the only route to just societies.

Behind the incessant drumbeat, intensified after 9/11, lies a political program based on a relentlessly negative meld of anti-Semitism, anti-Americanism, and anti-globalism. For the ideologues of the BBC, the *Guardian*, and other leading European journals—all 1968ers come to power—the past quarter-century has been an era of crushing disappointment. Once they placed their faith in Third World liberation movements abroad and a state-run economy at home. But both failed. Repeatedly cuckolded by history, they were increasingly defined by their hostilities rather than their hopes.

This coalition of shared resentments, already visible in Belgium (where an alliance of Muslim and Maoist parties jointly contested for parliamentary seats

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in 2003), was given a British coming-out party last November. A coalition of Marxist and Muslim groups organized a massive protest in London against the policies of Blair and President Bush, who was visiting.

The main organizers were Andrew Murray, a former employee of the Soviet news agency, and Mohammed Aslam Ijaz, of the London Council of Mosques. The biggest cheers were for George Galloway, the mustachioed MP from Glasgow who had recently been expelled from the Labour Party for his ties to Saddam Hussein. With his Palestinian wife at his side, Galloway used the rally to launch his plans for a new party to contest British and European elections on behalf of this new coalition.

> "The European left's **new embrace of anti-Semitism** should not have been a great surprise. Except for the **Nazi period**, it has for **well over a century** been the left in Europe that has promoted **anti-Semitic ideas and canards**."

The European left's new embrace of anti-Semitism should not have been a great surprise. Except for the Nazi period, it has for well over a century been the left in Europe that has promoted anti-Semitic ideas and canards—an old and virulent tradition that antedates fascism and Nazism. The mid-19th century French anarchist Pierre Proudhon, a figure of enduring influence, advocated "either sending back the Jews to Asia or exterminating them."

And Noam Chomsky's diatribes against Israel and the United States are mild compared with Karl Marx's anti-Semitism in "On the Jewish Question," published in 1843. In language that anticipates José Bové and the worst of the anti-globalists, Marx insists, "emancipation from usury and money, that is, from practical, real Judaism, would constitute the emancipation of our time." Marx descended from a line of Jewish rabbis, but his father converted the family to Protestantism; Marx, the son, later managed to come up with some of the ugliest anti-Semitic coinages. When he wanted to denigrate his rival, political philosopher Ferdinand Lassalle, he called him a "Jew Nigger."

After World War II Stalin alleged the existence of a "Doctors' Plot," masterminded by Jews to advance American interests and undermine the Soviet economy by poisoning top Soviet leaders. It was only Stalin's timely death in 1953 that prevented him from carrying out his reported plans to deport 2 million Jews to Siberia.

When overt anti-Semitism temporarily lost its respectability right after World War II, Nazi anti-Semitism was transplanted to the Arab and Islamic worlds. Arafat's predecessor as the leader of the Palestinians, Grand Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini, was a great admirer of Hitler and spent part of World War II in Berlin doing radio propaganda and promising that an Islamic jihad could both defeat the West and exterminate the Jews. The Mufti's fellow Islamic radical, Sayeed Qutb, the intellectual godfather of al Qaeda, merged Nazi, anti-American and Islamic themes into what became bin Ladenism.

The transfer of an essentially Nazi ideology into Islamist hatred of Jews reached its purest form on 9/11. The thinking of Mohammed Atta, the terrorist ringleader, echoed directly the Nazis' and Qutb's obsessions. Atta believed that "Jews control America" and that "Americans want to take over the world so Jews can amass capital," according a member of Atta's inner circle in Hamburg, who testified at the trial of another member. Said another: "Atta's world view was based on an anti-Semitic and anti-American position. His views had a Nazi framework. World Jewry was for him enemy number one. He considered New York to be the center of world Jewry."

Now the old anti-Semitism is back. In 2003, an EU poll showed that 60 percent of its citizens felt that Israel was the greatest threat to world peace—a sure sign of rising anti-Semitism, according to most European observers. "It's nearly as bad as it was in the 1930s," said U.S. Ambassador to the EU Rockwell Schnabel in February. But Europeans are in denial; they view the new anti-Semitic outbursts as a fringe phenomenon of the loony left and of alienated youths of the marginalized Muslim communities.

Fortunately, there are some Europeans—mostly feminists, not incidentally—who have spoken out against the continent's virulent anti-Zionism. They've labeled it de facto European outsourcing of anti-Semitism to the Arabs. Ilke Schroeder, a German member of the European Parliament, has led a group of 135 European parliamentarians in speaking out against the EU's indirect funding of Palestinian terrorism. She's criticized the EU for giving Arafat 10 million euros a month, no questions asked.

Like the old Soviet Union, the alliance of hate speaks of anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and anti-imperialism even as it advances its own racist, colonial, and imperialist goals. But Europeans should understand, as Schroeder warns, that they're likely to be burned by the fires they're kindling. Careless resort to the old anti-Semitic libels fuels an engine that, with a Muslim birth rate in Western Europe three times as high as the non-Muslim one, can soon lurch out of control.

Americans, too, should keep a vigilant eye on the troubling trend and have no qualms about speaking out against it. We do our transatlantic cousins no favors by giving them a pass on their new indulgence of an old weakness. ◆

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▶ WILL MARSHALL

Why the Dean putsch failed

There are many plausible explanations for Howard Dean's downfall, but his perverse decision to run as the anti-Clinton candidate tops my list. While Bill Clinton in 1992 campaigned against his party's past failures, Dean seemed to relish attacking those responsible for its most recent successes.

His campaign not only channeled activists' rage at Bush but also tapped into smoldering resentment in the party's left wing over the New Democrats' intellectual and political ascendancy. The Dean Zeppelin took flight only after Dean, the erstwhile centrist, adopted a belligerent anti-war stance and annointed himself the choleric champion of "the Democratic wing of the Democratic Party."

Why the leftward lurch? Dean and his followers seemed to have swallowed whole the paleoliberals' revisionist history of the 1990s. By this account, Clinton scored strictly personal triumphs by selling out the party's core principles and accommodating the country's rightward drift. Here's Dean's diagnosis: "While Bill Clinton said that the era of big government is over, I think we have to enter a new era for the Democratic Party, not one where we join Republicans and aim simply to limit the damage they inflict on working families." Dean also dismissed the New Democrat electoral strategy of reaching out to independents and swing voters: "We are going to take back the Democratic Party from the idea that the way to win elections is to neglect our base."

That Dean's putsch failed suggests that most Democrats remember the 1990s more fondly than he does. "Limiting damage" hardly does justice to the unprecedented surge of growth and job creation that brought unemployment, poverty, and budget deficits down while driving working family wages up. Public innovation also flourished, as New Democrats introduced national service, public charter schools, more cops and community policing, a work-based social policy to replace welfare, and other reforms. Clinton's "big government" line was not a sop to conservatives but an acknowledgement that central bureaucracies don't work very well in a networked world.

Judged on the results, it's incontestable that the 1990s was America's most progressive decade since the 1960s. Yet many on the left apparently haven't forgiven Clinton for achieving these results in unfamiliar and unorthodox ways.

It's true that Clinton's success didn't enable Democrats regain control of Congress after 1994. But surely that failure should be charged to the account of congressional leaders, who failed to offer the public compelling reasons to return Congress to Democratic control.

Dean's claim that New Democrats ignored the party's base is equally wrong-headed. Clinton's strongest supporters were African Americans, Latinos, and women. Yet Clinton also won more votes than Democratic candidates before and after him from white men, suburban moderates, and independents. He showed, in other words, that the "base versus swing voters" argument poses a classic false choice; winning candidates have to frame appealing messages to both.

Yet Dean embraced that hardy perennial of left-wing fancy: the myth of the hidden majority. It posits that there is a latent leftish majority slumbering in the electorate that can be galvanized to vote—but only if it hears the message loudly enough. Recent studies of non-voters, however, suggest that their preferences aren't much different from those who do go to the polls.

A more interesting challenge to the New Democrat legacy comes from Stanley B. Greenberg, a prominent Democratic pollster. In his new book, *The Two Americas*, Greenberg argues that the Clinton Democrats serve a vital purpose by reassuring voters with doubts about Democrats on issues like national security, fiscal discipline, and social and cultural values. But while a strategy of reassurance may eke out a victory in a presidential election, it won't break the deadlock in U.S. politics and build a durable Democratic majority, writes Greenberg.

This may be true. But Greenberg also overlooks the dynamic, reformist dimension of New Democrat ideas. Democrats won't beat Bush or realign U.S. politics by defending the programmatic status quo against GOP onslaughts. To be relevant, they must offer better solutions to today's most urgent challenges: the need to fundamentally redesign our schools for the 21st century; to help poor families achieve self-sufficiency and upward mobility; to promote "clean growth" by helping America kick its oil habit; to help parents balance work and family; to make Medicare an agent of successful aging, not just a payment system; and to modernize Social Security for rising generations that want more personal control over their retirement security.

Dean's campaign failed because the real choice facing Democrats isn't between a principled liberalism and a soulless centrism. It's between ideological purism and a radical pragmatism that wins because it works. ◆

> **Will Marshall** is president of the Progressive Policy Institute.

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In their faces

Political minefields haven't deterred Britain's Tony Blair from pressing forward with new progressive reforms.

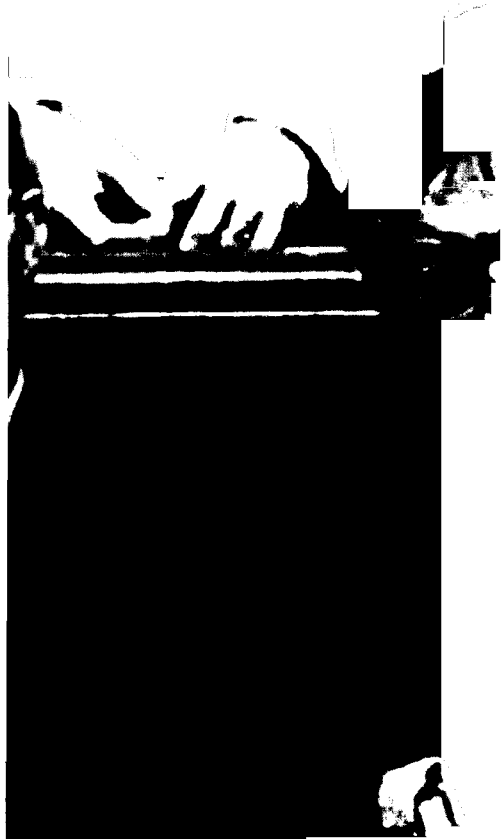
> *by* **Robert Philpot**

As seen from across the Atlantic Ocean, it surely must appear that Tony Blair, the British prime minister, has a political death wish. Houdini-like, he keeps cheating the noose of political extinction, only to push forward with more reforms that put him at odds with a significant portion of his own Labour Party, and close to a confidence motion that would shake the foundations of his government. Blair's recent narrow escapes include a razor-thin victory in Parliament on raising tuition for higher education (Britain had almost no tuition before) and his exoneration, by the so-called Hutton Inquiry, of having lied to the nation about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction before the war. In February, his administration was beset by allegations from a bitter former cabinet member that the government had spied on United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan. Now Blair faces another inquiry on the government's pre-war intelligence.

But none of these close calls seems to have forced Blair to give up on his progressive project—his plan to modernize Britain and, with it, the Labour Party. His push for centrist reforms and progressive policies remains the core of his political program, despite opposition from within his own party. One of the most important reforms is introducing the concept of choice into Britain's public services. This includes changes in the National Health Service (diagnostic centers to be run by the private sector) and the school system (more parental choice and New Democrat-like charter schools). These are anathema to the hard-core old left in the Labour Party, yet Blair repeatedly manages to outflank them, if only by a few votes.

Like President Clinton in the 1990s, Blair is trying to pull his own party, kicking and screaming, into a new era. How Blair pulls off his nervy balancing act—juggling traditional Labour principles of social equity with the need to modernize—is of more than passing interest to U.S. Democrats. After all, Blair's struggle today to create "New Labour" is up against some of the same difficulties that bedeviled Clinton as he helped establish New Democrats in the 1990s. Yet Blair seems to be succeeding better than the Democrats at what Clinton described as one of the progressives' key challenges: party renewal while in power. "The burden of progressive politics is that we have to treat every single year in politics as if it were our first," Clinton said.

Blair seems to have figured out how to do that. He's been Labour's party leader for a decade, and he's kept the party in power for more than six years—longer than ever in its history. The prime minister is never more confident than when facing down those in the party he believes were responsible for its long spells out of power. Blair and his team believe strongly that Labour's past failure to sustain itself in office reflects the historic inability of progressive parties to renew themselves while governing. His goal is to reverse that. His method is to show that the center-left can adapt its policies to changing times while holding to its core values. He wants to give a positive answer to the nagging question in British politics: Can the left govern?



BESIEGED, BUT UNBOWED: B many in his own Labour Party remains determined to mode progressive politics.

Blairites are convinced that to remain in power, Labour must not simply invest more in Britain's public services—all agree on that. The party must also ensure that the services are reformed and adapted to the changing demands of those who use them. In an age when the private sector offers—and people expect—ever greater choices, flexibility, and personally tailored services, Blair believes that the public sector must do the same. In place of the uniform services offered in the past, Blair wants to see services personalized—with such reforms as the new diagnostic clinics and charter schools, called city academies.

Ironically, Blair—like Clinton—has

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found more support for his reforms in the national party than in the parliamentary one. Just as the Democrats in the U.S. Congress are to the left of the Democratic electorate in national elections, Blair's problems with his own party activists at the top are somewhat offset by greater support in the local Labour parties around Britain. Like Democratic voters in the U.S. primaries, Labour's members are proving to be more progressive, sensitive to electability of their candidates, and deaf to the siren calls of the old left than many people expected. Even at Labour's annual party conferences, for the past two or three years a division has been growing between the grassroots attendees, who supported Blair's public-sector reforms, and the trade union delegates, who were less sympathetic.

None of this has been easy for Blair. His great fear is that if Labour does not renew itself in office, it will repeat its history. He frequently recalls how previous Labour governments simply ran out of steam—and lost touch with their own voters—in the early 1950s and the late 1970s. The party paid for those failures with long stretches in the political wilderness. Blair is also keenly aware of the failure of other center-left governments in Europe—particularly in France and Holland. They lost power after failing to resolve what Par Nuder, a minister in Sweden's Social Democrat government, has termed "the incumbency/insurgency dilemma." Nuder is referring to the tendency of incumbent governments to become defenders of the status quo, rather than remaining insurgents committed to reform and change.

Blair knows that even Houdini could someday hang by his own rope and that derring-do is not the best way to govern. So he's looking for better ways to sell his progressive project. He has acknowledged that he needs to consult more widely, and prepare the ground more carefully, before launching more difficult and controversial policies. He has, for instance, launched what he calls "the Big Conversation," a consultation exercise in which he is asking Labour's members and representatives at all levels to engage the public in a debate about the challenges Britain faces over the coming decades.

On substance, however, Blair is unlikely to compromise much. He's convinced of the rightness of his course. The only question is whether he can keep slipping the political noose while leading the country to historic reforms. However dangerous the game, Blair shows no signs of slowing down. ◆

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▶ SEN. TOM CARPER

Mutual aid

No community has the resources necessary to cope with every potential emergency alone. So when state and local homeland security authorities formulate strategies for responding to terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and other calamitous incidents, they must cooperate across jurisdictional lines and plan to share personnel, equipment, and other assets.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has recognized that regional cooperation among first responders is essential. It has encouraged states to develop specific regional action plans as part of the security strategy documents they must submit in order to draw federal homeland security funds. But federal officials have been vague about what regional cooperation plans should entail; they have not supplied states with any sort of template to follow. Fortunately, some states have made great strides on their own, and their experience may hold useful lessons for others.

One of the leaders in regionally focused security planning has been Arizona, where Gov. Janet Napolitano released a comprehensive security agenda in April 2003. Action item No. 3 in her roadmap was to "establish formal protocols that facilitate multiagency coordination during critical incident response." Emergency management officials acted quickly on that order. In June 2003, the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association, which had already been considering a formal cooperative agreement, produced the nation's first detailed statewide mutual aid agreement for firefighters.

Sharing resources may sound like a simple matter. (In fact, informal understandings have long guided cooperation among local law enforcement authorities in Arizona.) But for firefighters, who operate heavy equipment that is very expensive, the chiefs' formal mutual aid agreement promises to head off some potentially sticky logistical issues.

The plan spares no detail. It divides the state into five regions, each with a 24-hour dispatch center; it establishes chains of command; it foresees the need for such things as liability and property damage insurance to cover equipment used beyond the territorial limits of a given political subdivision; and it spells out which state laws and policies will dictate the terms of financial reimbursement for services.

The planning process for mutual agreements like the Arizona Fire Chiefs' plan can yield a slew of side benefits. For example, the process may reveal legal obstacles where regulatory or statutory action is needed to help facilitate cooperation among jurisdictions. Planning also helps state and local authorities identify day-to-day operational resources, such as public health information systems, that also have valuable applications in crisis situations. Such "dual-use" potential should be taken into account in the budgeting process.

Napolitano's director of homeland security, Frank Navarrete, says "regionalization is the name of the game," in part because it is a way to get the most bang for every buck in the budget. "Everybody cannot afford to have identical pieces of equipment," he says.

That's particularly true of big-ticket items such as fire trucks. But planning for interdepartmental cooperation can also point out nuts-and-bolts issues such as the interoperability of communications and data systems. Longstanding mutual aid agreements between sister cities on either side of the Arizona-Mexico border helped lay the groundwork for a recently completed "border interoperability project." Newly installed equipment in the four Arizona counties along the border allows Mexican and U.S. firefighters, law enforcement officials, and medical teams to communicate on the same radio frequency. Meanwhile, Navarrete says Arizona authorities have been conducting regular exercises around the state, including weapons of mass destruction exercises near the border, in cooperation with their Mexican colleagues.

The end goal in mutual aid planning—particularly since Sept. 11—is to ensure that all available resources can be efficiently brought to bear in a large-scale emergency. "What we've learned over the last two and one-half years is that when it comes to homeland security, no city or town can go it alone," says John Cohen, co-director of the Progressive Policy Institute's homeland security task force and a consultant who helped Arizona formulate some of its plans. Moreover, says Cohen, "if you're going to have extensive collaboration to deal with a threat, it's obviously much more effective if you've worked out the details of the working together before the emergency occurs."

Indeed, the need for regional planning in homeland security is now widely agreed upon. But without clear federal guidelines, it remains to be seen whether states will consistently implement mutual aid plans everywhere they are appropriate. The Department of Homeland Security should carefully assess the extent to which other states follow examples such as Arizona's. We may need to push harder to ensure that regional best practices are widely adopted. ◆

> **Sen. Tom Carper** (D-Del.) is the DLC Chair for Best Practices.

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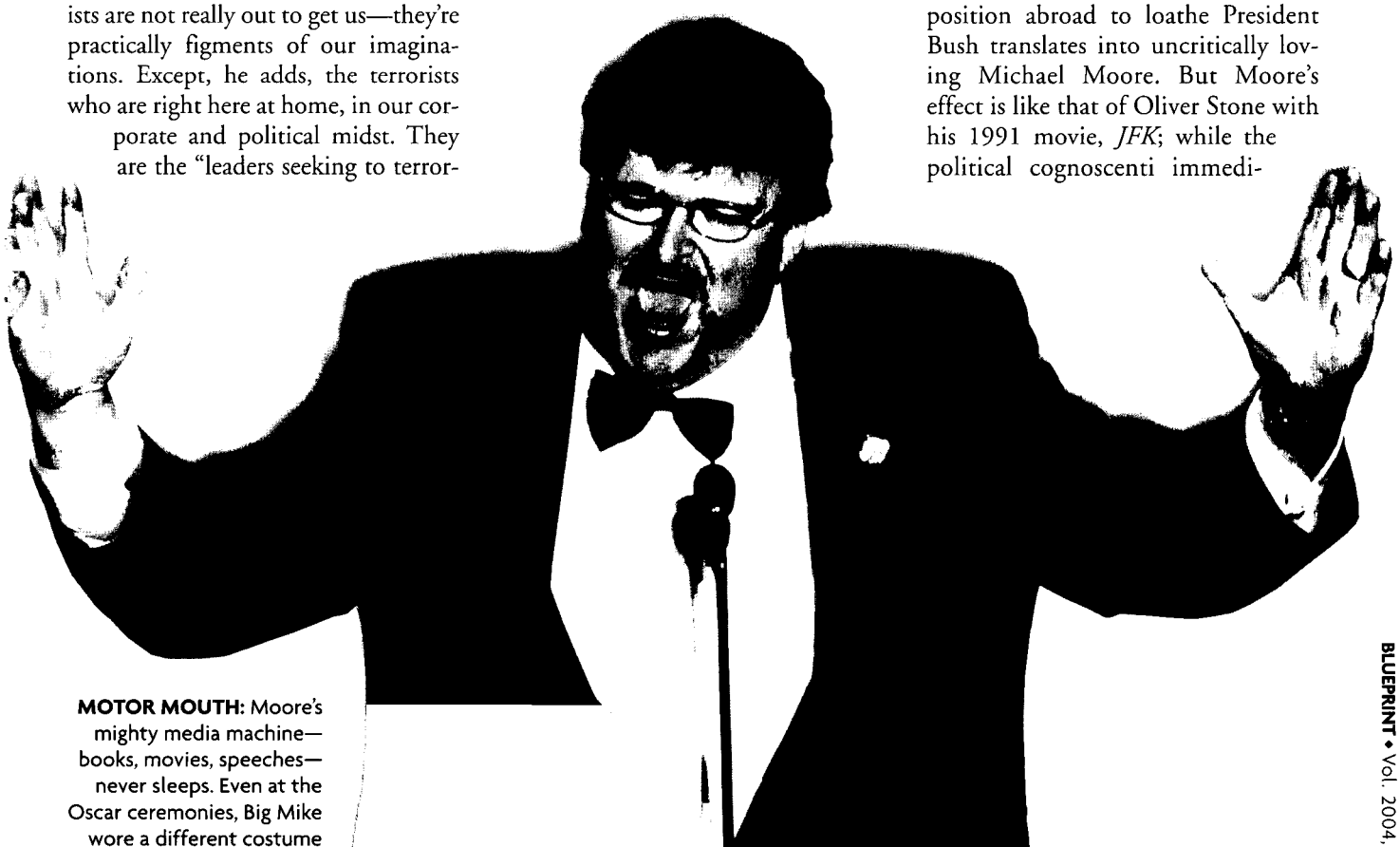
Michael Moore's truth problem

> *by* **Peter Ross Range** || Is Michael Moore a courageous political documentarist who unmasks the chicanery all around us—or just a charlatan in a clown suit? Is he an entertainment genius or a dangerous ideologue? The answer, of course, is all of the above. The problem is that you never know which of the four is doing the talking in Moore's movies and books. The end result is that the writer-filmmaker spreads a fog of misbegotten notions about America, politics, business, and international affairs among his youthful, left-leaning following at home and, indeed, around the world. Uninformed readers and viewers tend to believe everything he says.

In his latest book, *Dude, Where's My Country?*, for example, Moore peddles the absurd notion that terrorists are not really out to get us—they're practically figments of our imaginations. Except, he adds, the terrorists who are right here at home, in our corporate and political midst. They are the "leaders seeking to terrorize us" and the "corporate mujahadeen" that run America, he writes. Furthermore, globalization—tee shirts from China? data processing from India?—is the main cause of terrorism.

These are just a few of the wacky ideas that spring from the fevered mind of Moore. Mixed with truisms, half-truths, and occasional truths, Moore's fulminations are a frothy brew of alarmist conspiracy theories and anti-American rhetoric. They are part of a new entertainment form pioneered by the likes of Rush Limbaugh, refined by such imitators as Ann Coulter and Bill O'Reilly, then carried to comedic proportions by left-leaning Al Franken.

But what makes Moore different, and worth seriously critiquing, is his global reach. With his multimedia machine of books, movies, international speech-making, and the occasional television show, Moore is a worldwide force with outsized influence among the young, the naïve, and the distant—especially among our friends in Europe. Moore's previous book, *Stupid White Men*, sold 3 million copies, almost one million of them in Germany alone. The predisposition abroad to loathe President Bush translates into uncritically loving Michael Moore. But Moore's effect is like that of Oliver Stone with his 1991 movie, *JFK*; while the political cognoscenti immedi-



MOTOR MOUTH: Moore's mighty media machine—books, movies, speeches—never sleeps. Even at the Oscar ceremonies, Big Mike wore a different costume but mouthed the same rant.

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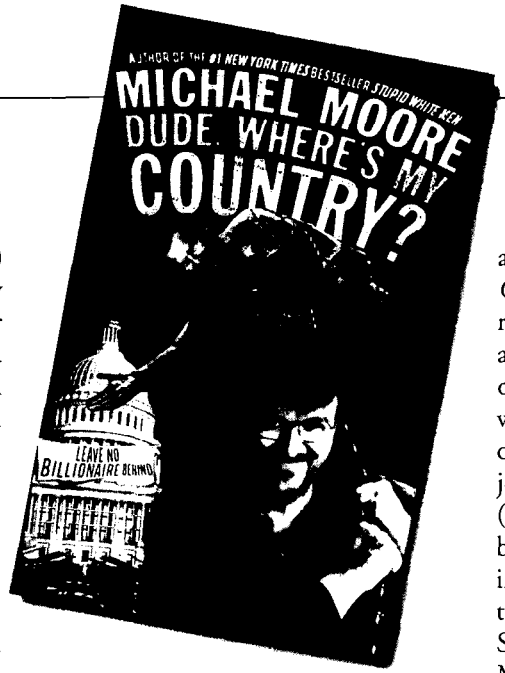
AUTHOR OF THE #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER STUPID WHITE MEN
MICHAEL MOORE
DUDE, WHERE'S MY COUNTRY?
LEAVE NO BILLIONAIRE BEHIND

DUDE, WHERE'S MY COUNTRY?
by Michael Moore • Warner Books • 249 pp • $25.00

ately denounced the movie's (clever) twisting of history, the historically untutored—lots of people born after November 22, 1963—loved and believed the movie's conspiratorial take that Lyndon B. Johnson wanted to have John F. Kennedy killed.

Likewise, large swaths of the American and European intelligentsia seem to believe Moore's claims, in *Dude* for example, that the Dark Side is taking over with a form of insidious domestic terrorism and a culture of fear. Moore's answer is to create a culture of conspiracy theories in which the real terrorists are not outside forces like al Qaeda but the boardroom denizens who rule America. The war on terror should, in Moore's view, not focus on the external enemy but, rather, "be a war on our own darkest impulses."

And there you have the essential Moore—a worldview of America as a failed project and an abiding danger to the planet. No wonder they so love Moore abroad: His is a 1960s vision, hardened in the pre-NAFTA plant closings of the 1980s, of a nation hijacked by the suits, the very guys who for decades gave Moore's father a good job at General Motors. It's from this posture that all the Moorean invective flows.

> "Having discovered the **marketability of his slob persona** just as Nader traded on his **ascetic gestalt**, Moore **lurches** around **grabbing factoids** off the front pages and holding them up as **interrogative cudgels**."

While Moore and Franken are the two leftist voices in the shout-and-denounce game, the differences between them are stark. Franken is a comedian who's bending his craft to political ends. Moore is a televangelist in leftie preacher's clothes—jeans, cap, sneakers—who tarts up a serious ideological point of view with entertainment values. Also, Franken is partisan while Moore wishes a pox on every house in sight. Franken smites the Republican foe with clear factual ripostes, saving his humor mainly for putting himself down. Moore is more ecumenical: He targets both big parties (he supported Ralph Nader in 2000 and still faults President Clinton for bombing Serbia). He attacks U.S. capitalism, and, indeed, American society and culture generally. And Moore's humor is an over-the-top mélange that plays fast and loose with the facts. The bad guys (conservatives) are winning, warns Moore, despite the fact that America is really "a liberal-majority nation"—scores of polls to the contrary notwithstanding. America has, among other things, a "love affair with homosexuality," he writes—another example of Moore's specious reasoning. By positing the opposite of what all the evidence suggests, he seeks to discredit the evidence. His writing sometimes comes close to the method known as the Big Lie.

Yet the secret of Moore's success—besides the widespread receptivity to an anti-American message in leftish circles at home and abroad—is he's also half right. In *Bowling for Columbine*, his 2002 hit movie, he rightly highlighted America's love affair with guns and violence with serious questions (why do Canadians, who also own lots of guns, kill each other less?). He approached the subject with disarming but scathing irony (obtaining a free rifle from a Michigan bank vault by simply opening a checking account). He's right to make us think about the Columbine High School massacre, the Timothy McVeigh terrorist bombing, the loose gunplay in our urban slums, and the atmosphere in which they could happen. But, like all Moore's movies, *Columbine* is a tendentious quasi-documentary. It has its brilliant moments—and puts Moore's sometimes perfect comic pitch on display—but is undermined by idiotic slices of foreign policy rhetoric and painfully gratuitous scenes like the hectoring interview of Charlton Heston at the end. For this he was lionized at last year's Cannes film festival and given an Oscar at the Academy Awards (where he outraged his hosts by delivering a vintage Moorean rant against the Iraq war).

Moore has carved out a role for himself in American culture akin to that of both the early and the late Ralph Nader—who is ever with us. Moore is a media star among provocateurs. He stumbled onto a good thing early in his career by exposing, in the eccentric and egocentric *Roger and Me* (1989), the insensitivity of General Motors to the havoc the company wreaked with its abrupt plant closings in Flint, Mich., a cradle of the United Auto Workers union. Moore also developed a gimmick, the picaresque search for an elusive solution and an elusive person, the chairman of GM, whom he fashioned into a shadowy bugaboo. As theater, it worked.

But then Moore parlayed that gig

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DOWN WITH EVERYTHING! Moore's anti-globablist vision coincides with the benighted worldview of demonstrators at such destructive, regressive protests as the 1999 Battle in Seattle.

into an ideological jihad that led him into the archetypal anti-American crusade that has characterized his subsequent films and books. In *Dude*, and in other works, Moore—having discovered the marketability of his slob persona just as Nader traded on his ascetic gestalt—lurches around grabbing factoids off the front pages and holding them up as interrogative cudgels. These are the cheap shots of an agenda-driven debate. Like moviemaker Stone, Moore can paste together conspiracy theories with the best of them, and deliver them in a fog of innuendo and accusation.

Finally, like Nader, Moore falls back on that 1960s demon—the perfidious corporation—and its handmaiden, the inherently nefarious government, as the root of all evil. In *Dude*, he shows his hand transparently with a screeching attack on the hobgoblin he calls "Bush/Cheney/Ashcroft/Wall Street/Fortune 500" which, he claims, has "a feverish desire to rule the world." This cabal's chosen weapon, fear, is based on the threat of terrorism. But, says Moore, "there is no terrorist threat." In case we didn't get that, he says it again: ***"THERE ... IS ... NO ... TERRORIST ... THREAT!"***

Moore's claim is more than just silly; it's the first step onto the slippery slope of blaming America first: Americans Are The Real Terrorists! First, Moore tries to dismiss the importance of 9/11 by playing the numbers game: Three thousand killed is a tiny amount in the greater scheme of life, when far more people die every year in homicides and car accidents. Second, he tells us that terror is nothing but a noun. "How exactly do you conduct a war on a noun? Wars are fought against countries, religions, and peoples. They are not fought against nouns or problems. ..."

Thanks for that foreign policy lesson, dude.

Moore's other favorite targets are free trade and globalization—hot topics in an election year. His arch-villains, naturally, are the "corporate terrorists [who] take people's jobs away whenever the mood hits them." This is the kind of fact-free drivel that Moore brings to a serious debate, a print version of the shouted message of masked anarchists at the 1999 Seattle meeting of the World Trade Organization. Moore also claims that globalization will boost terrorism by making overseas workers angry at America for providing jobs that don't quite measure up to OSHA and UAW standards.

Clearly, the author's imaginative powers far outstrip his reporting or analytical skills. Consider, for exam-

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ple, his riff that bounds from showing a Bush family business connection with the bin Laden family (true) to the suggestion that 9/11 was not merely the work of 15 Saudi Arabian terrorists and four others, *but the work of the Saudi Arabian Air Force* (not true). Moore asks Bush:

> "Who attacked the United States on September 11—a guy on dialysis from a cave in Afghanistan, or your friends, Saudi Arabia? … You do not get this skilled at learning how to fly jumbo jets by being taught on a video game machine at some dipshit flight training school in Arizona. You learn to do this in the air force. Someone's air force. *The Saudi Air Force?* What if these weren't wacko terrorists, but military pilots who signed on to a suicide mission? What if they were doing this at the behest of either the Saudi government or certain disgruntled members of the Saudi royal family? … Why do you refuse to say, 'Saudi Arabia attacked the United States!'?"

When Moore has his facts right—on, say, the troubled state of U.S. public education—he still undermines his message by presenting it in a shock-jock tone, like the Howard Stern of print. "A nation that not only churns out illiterate students BUT GOES OUT OF ITS WAY TO REMAIN IGNORANT AND STUPID should not be running the world …," shouts Moore in *Stupid White Men.*

Yet Moore has become a cultural icon, a player in the marketplace of political extremism as entertainment. No matter what the subject of the book or movie, the main product is always Michael, Big Mike, always out front, the Michelin tire man of politics. Though Moore is now a multimillionaire living mostly in New York, it's part of his schtick to present himself as the threadbare leftie, the scourge of the boardroom, the long-suffering Everyman jousting against the corporate meanies. "Believe me, they'd like me out that door as soon as possible," he confides, just between us, in a folksy picnic bench chat on his *Bowling for Columbine: Special Edition* DVD, distributed by MGM ("they").

But Mike's not going away. He's in for another film called *Fahrenheit 911.* It's reportedly on the Bush-bin Laden connection and is already in production. It'll be fun, it'll be a hit, and it will probably be partly true. But which parts? ◆

> **Peter Ross Range** is editor of BLUEPRINT.
Research assistance provided by Eben Gilfenbaum.

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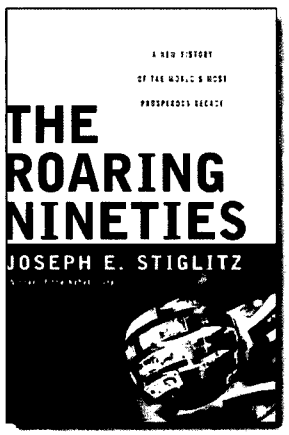
Rewriting history

> *by* **Robert D. Atkinson** || In the past few years a cottage industry of New Economy debunkers has arisen, telling us that the 1990s boom was nothing but hype. The newest arrival is economist Joseph E. Stiglitz, a professor at Columbia University. Stiglitz's voice is an important one: He's a former World Bank chief economist who won a Nobel Prize for his work on the effects of asymmetric information on market phenomena. He was also chairman of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers during the 1990s.

Yet Stiglitz announces right up front in *The Roaring Nineties* that he wants to "rewrite the economic history of the nineties." Indeed, taking a leaf from the Bush administration's economic playbook, he calls the 1990s an unsustainable bubble that ended in "disaster." The problem with this analysis is that for most people, the 1990s were pretty darn good and don't need rewriting. Stiglitz downplays the fact that the 1990s were the best decade economically in 40 years—a decade in which 20 million new jobs were created, homeownership reached record levels, and poverty and unemployment fell dramatically.

Why, one might ask, would someone want to rewrite the history of such a period? The answer lies in the fact that Stiglitz rejects the New Democratic formula for growth: fiscal discipline, open markets, competition through globalization and deregulation, and investment in the knowledge-intensive building blocks of growth like research and training.

At the root of Stiglitz's critique is his belief in the philosophy of the old economy: Keynesianism. He reflects the overriding interest of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party in putting equity and stability ahead of robust growth. His book is an attempt to take Democrats back to their economic policies of the 1960s and



THE ROARING NINETIES: A New History of the World's Most Prosperous Decade
by Joseph E. Stiglitz • W.W. Norton & Company • 256 pp • $25.95

1970s, policies that are completely out of step with the new, dynamic global economy. And the only way he can claim that his liberal Keynesian alternative is superior is by discrediting the 1990s.

Before examining his analysis of what supposedly went wrong, it's worth looking at Stiglitz's major claim: The economy of the 1990s contained the seeds of its own destruction. Stiglitz relies largely on opinion to make his case. He claims that "too much of our investment went into wasteful private-sector expenditures" when, in fact, most studies have linked high levels of information technology investment with the turnaround in productivity growth. Even the "billions wasted on unused fiber-optic cable"—a reference to the initial overbuilding of the nation's fiber-optic network—provide value to the economy as low data transport prices drive the growth of the digital economy.

"Even if we consider that only a fraction of the erosion in stock values is attributable to bad investments, the figure must be in the hundreds of billions of dollars," writes Stiglitz. Yet, since 1997, most stock values, including Internet and computer stocks, have gone up handily, not down—hardly an indication of massive waste. Stiglitz also overlooks the role of the Internet and e-commerce in the 1990s boom, other than to talk of a dot-com bubble. Yet, business-to-business and business-to-consumer e-commerce are both much larger today than analysts predicted in the late 1990s, and both are helping to power today's high productivity growth rates.

There is no question that there was a downturn and that it might have been shorter and shallower "had the economy been well managed [under Bush]," as Stiglitz writes. Likewise, there is no question that some of the excesses of the 1990s—the dot-com shakeout, corporate scandals, the collapse of the stock markets, fears of a Y2K meltdown—contributed to the problems. So did the events of 9/11. But Stiglitz wants to blame someone, and that someone is New Democrats.

He tries to draw a Keynesian line between old and New Democrats by stating that "there is a need for laws and regulations—to ensure fair competition, to protect the environment, to make sure that consumers and investors were not cheated." What New Democrat, one wonders, would not agree with that?

Perhaps most emblematic of Stiglitz's antediluvian—that is, pre-New Economy, 1960s—economics is his quaint faith in old-fashioned regulation. He would take us back to the days before airline and telecom deregulation. "Airline deregulation led to a burst of new carriers, but most of them did not survive," Stiglitz says. How many survived is not the issue: Just ask people happily lining up to fly

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on Southwest or JetBlue because of their discount fares.

As for telecom deregulation, Stiglitz says he "worried that competition would not be strong enough to dispense with regulation." Ask all those who pay 3 cents a minute for their long distance calls, or who recently jumped from one cell phone company to another, whether they feel there's enough competition in the market. Or ask anyone who's familiar with the 1996 Telecommunications Act and the Federal Communications Commison's implementation of it during the Clinton administration. The last thing they will say is that regulation was dispensed with.

What really gets Stiglitz exercised is that the 1990s saw the ascendancy of "Rubinomics" over Keynesianism. Named for Clinton's treasury secretary, Robert E. Rubin, Rubinomics asserts that deficit reduction leads to lower interest rates that help the economy grow. But because deficit reduction cut into government spending, Stiglitz complains that it went too far and "may even be bad for long-term economic growth."

He comes up with an alternative reason the economy grew after the Clinton administration took the tough and politically risky steps it did to reduce the deficit. Stiglitz argues that because banks were highly invested in bonds, bond prices increased when interest rates fell. Thus the banks were better capitalized, enabling them to more easily lend money and spur the economy. While this may have been a factor for the first year or two, there's no reason it would have played a role after that, whereas deficit reduction clearly played a role in driving down interest rates throughout the 1990s.

Stiglitz thinks deficit reduction went too far under Clinton and that the true agenda of those who pushed it—including New Democrats—"was to overturn Keynesian economics and/or to downsize government." As a proponent of "growth economics," I would gladly plead guilty to the first charge. Keynesian economics, with its overriding focus on the business cycle and propping up consumer demand, was overdue to be jettisoned. Stiglitz ignores the fact that we live in 2004, not 1934, and we not only have a huge national debt (made much larger by the fiscal recklessness of the Bush administration) but an impending baby boom retirement tsunami. Where does he think we will get the money to pay for this if we don't reduce the national debt?

Like many liberals, instead of reducing the debt, Stiglitz would rather spend more. In this regard, he seems perversely to have much in common with President Bush, who has presided over the largest federal budget deficit in history. There is no doubt that some of what Stiglitz proposes, such as increased investment in education, training, science, and technology, are needed and would help the economy grow. But Stiglitz isn't just talking about a narrow set of "investments"; he wants more spending in a number of areas, and he calls it "investing" to justify it and make it palatable. He calls for "investing" more in our inner cities as part of an economic growth agenda. There are legitimate reasons to spend more to revitalize distressed urban areas. However, spending on urban policy

HERETICS! According to Stiglitz's Keynesian analysis, President Clinton and his Secretary, Robert Rubin, championed an economic formula that was near blasp But Stiglitz's logic is riddled with flaws.

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does little to boost productivity and economic growth.

Stiglitz was even more unhappy with the Clinton administration's international economic policies than with its domestic ones. He claims that free trade hurts developing nations. He's right to point out that growth in developing nations has been hurt by the insistence of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United States that developing nations make fighting inflation their top priority. He also correctly points out that we have kept some of our markets closed and subsidized our farmers to the detriment of developing nations. But one could make these points without discrediting the entire globalization project, which he does.

In fact, Stiglitz seems to have swallowed the arguments of the anti-globalists, for he mistakes the protests of a few radicals for a true consensus. He claims that "the day of reckoning for the broader mistakes in managing globalization ... took place on our own shores, as we pushed for a new round of trade negotiations in Seattle in December 1999, with civil demonstrations of a magnitude that had not been seen in more than a quarter-century, during the Vietnam War." Talk about letting TV images drive your policy positions! The reality is that polls show that a majority of Americans, and even Europeans, support globalization.

But Stiglitz will have none of it. For him, the global trading system allows the rich and powerful to exploit the weak and poor. He bashes the drug companies for trying to protect their intellectual property rights in trade deals, and says they should sell their products at far below cost, failing to recognize that a public-private partnership to help poor nations buy needed drugs would be a better way to go.

He complains that the United States unfairly attacks the Japanese and Chinese for being protectionists. Yet, given that they both run a massive trade surplus with America, it's hard to see how our trade policies are unfair to them. Stiglitz blames us for "being the stingiest of the developed countries in giving aid," overlooking that a large part of our contribution is as "the world's policeman" and that the Europeans and Japanese get a free ride under our defense shield.

Notwithstanding all this, Stiglitz does make a number of good points, such as stressing that we can't forget that there is a role for public investment and taking on the Bush administration for its budget-busting tax cuts and corporate cronyism.

His discussion of the Bush tax cuts and Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan's complicity is particularly insightful. He criticizes Greenspan for claiming in 2001—in what was either a mistake of enormous magnitude or a cynical ploy—that the budget surpluses were adequate to allow for a huge tax cut. Greenspan then claimed we should cut taxes immediately, because paying off the debt would have made it difficult to manage monetary policy. As Stiglitz points out, "Greenspan did not see fit to explain why it was desirable to cut taxes far in advance of this improbable catastrophe rather than wait for the peril to become a little bit more imminent—and for good reason; there was no reason."

Stiglitz also rightly points out that we have underinvested in research, but he makes it seem as if Democrats and Republicans were equally to blame. He overlooks the fact that in 2000, for example, House Republicans proposed a $1.8 billion reduction in the Clinton administration's fiscal year 2001 civilian research budget request.

Overall, the book would be on much stronger ground if it were not for the large number of inconsistencies. On the one hand, Stiglitz praises the Clinton administration's efforts to turn the Air Traffic Control System (ATCS) into a corporation, but then blames the Clinton administration because corporate lobbyists and the ATCS union defeated the idea in Congress. He says deficit reduction slows economic growth, yet later he says that had we pursued less aggressive deficit reduction, economic growth would have been less robust. The list goes on.

Likewise, the book is riddled with errors that undermine its credibility. Stiglitz turns U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes of Maryland, a Democrat, into a Republican. He claims that the telecom sector provided two-thirds of the new jobs in the 1990s, when it was less than 1 percent. He claims that in Latin America "the boom was more than offset by the bust," when employment there went up significantly.

At the end of the day, Stiglitz doesn't completely write off New Democrats. He thinks they can be redeemed, and he hopes his book "will help them see more clearly what they could be striving for." For New Democrats who helped spur the 1990s boom, Stiglitz's guidance may not be worth much. The last thing the public needs to hear now, as Democrats try to win back the White House, is that their crowning moment—the success of the Clinton years—was a "disaster."

Stiglitz may be a world-class analyst of asymmetric information, but his study of the basics of growth, productivity, and the building blocks of prosperity in a post-Keynesian world is sadly flawed. ◆

> Like many liberals, instead of **reducing the debt**, Stiglitz would rather **spend more**. In this regard, he seems perversely to have **much in common with President Bush**.

> **Robert D. Atkinson** is vice president of the Progressive Policy Institute and director of its Technology and New Economy Project.

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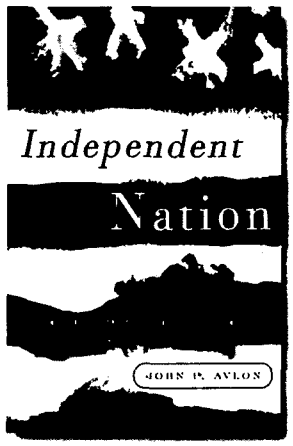
Can the center hold?



INDEPENDENT NATION : How the Vital Center Is Changing American Politics
by John Avlon • Harmony Book • 400 pp • $24.00

> *by* **Ed Kilgore** || One of the main tenets of contemporary political wisdom is that America is deeply polarized along partisan lines, reflecting deep cultural differences between "red states" and "blue states." And indeed, in the administration of a president who promised to change the tone in Washington, the atmosphere in the nation's capital is truly toxic.

Republicans, led by hyper-ideologue Tom DeLay, run Congress in a partisan fashion unseen since the days of "Tsar" Reed and "Iron Joe" Cannon. Governor Howard Dean built his presidential campaign on his belief that Democratic centrists have cravenly surrendered to George W. Bush, and that further partisan polarization is necessary for Democratic success in 2004. Despite the recent demise of his presidential campaign, he won broad approbation among many opinion leaders on the left.

Into these prevailing winds of political wisdom sails *New York Sun* columnist John P. Avlon with *Independent Nation*, a brave and compelling case for the past persistence and future dominance of American centrism. In this country centrism is not just a concept but an enduring tradition, Avlon argues, whose adherents have policed the partisan extremes of both political parties and been responsible for some of the country's greatest accomplishments.

Most of the book is devoted to a series of brief but instructive vignettes on centrist politicians from both parties—successful and unsuccessful—ranging from Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson to Bill Clinton and John McCain. A few especially valuable chapters resurrect such forgotten political moments as Earl Warren's stunning 1946 victory in both the Democratic and Republican California gubernatorial primaries and Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan's ideological struggle against Bella Abzug in New York in 1976.

There is much pithy analysis throughout, especially of recent events, including this comment on the 2000 presidential campaign: "The irony is that as Bush was embracing the style and rhetoric of Centrism while keeping much of his policy content conservative, Gore was doing precisely the opposite. The populist slogans and embrace of the liberal left stood in contrast to largely Centrist policy proposals."

Avlon's book will be particularly useful reading for those partisans who deplore any airing of intraparty differences. In presidential elections, Avlon points out, intraparty fights about policy and what we now call "message" have more often led to general election victories than defeats. Presidents Wilson, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Nixon, Carter, Clinton, and Bush all benefited from tough nomination fights.

> "A few **especially valuable** chapters resurrect such forgotten political moments as **Earl Warren's stunning 1946 victory** in both the Democratic and Republican California gubernatorial primaries and **Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan's** ideological **struggle against** Bella Abzug in New York in 1976."

But what makes this book more than a collection of history lessons is Avlon's stout argument, particularly in his first and last chapters, that centrism is a coherent political tradition with a future as well as a past. Rejecting the tired argument that centrists are typically political opportunists who abandon their party's principles in pursuit of an ephemeral election victory, the author finds a series of common threads that unite this tribe over time and across party boundaries.

To summarize Avlon's case, centrists share: a commitment to real-life problem-solving through innovative public policies; a hostility to extremist positions and the type of partisan warfare that makes effective governance impossible; a proclivity to create new and unusual coalitions of voters and other political actors to deal with issues on which conventional party politicians are disabled; and a spirit of independence from the special-interest groups that, over time, tend to affiliate with and eventually dominate every political party.

Though Avlon never quite says so, his typology of centrism works for two very different types of politicians. First, there are those who seek to reform existing parties while adhering to—and indeed, in some cases, rediscovering—traditional party principles. This class of centrists—who might be

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called party reformers—includes Theodore Roosevelt, Wilson, Kennedy, Clinton, and (in 2000 at least) McCain.

Then there are those who simply act outside the party base to create a temporary majority across party lines, usually on the basis of personal or local appeal, without really aiming to produce any long-range transformation. This category, best described as mavericks, includes most of the figures highlighted in Avlon's book, especially such Republicans as Earl Warren, Nelson Rockefeller, Sen. Edward Brooke, and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

Several 1990s-era independent governors, including Angus King, Lowell Weicker, and Jesse Ventura, would probably also be classified as mavericks. Party reformer centrists can come from anywhere, but they distinctively aim at changing, not just dissenting from, party orthodoxy. Maverick centrists often represent regional factions that are out of tune with national party majorities, and tend to come out of states where the other party is dominant and party heresy is the only route to political victory. This distinction is important in assessing Avlon's case for the future of centrism.

He notes that independents have become the plurality party in America, and that an actual majority of voters now consistently identify themselves as moderates rather than as liberals or conservatives. He also argues, persuasively, that the enduring partisan parity of the country reflects the electorate's fear of letting either party extreme dominate the country, rather than a deadlock between deeply but evenly divided factions.

> "With the **center of gravity** in both major parties still listing to the **left or right**, there should be **plenty of open ground** for the party or the candidate who is willing to **move toward the center**."

With the center of gravity in both major parties still listing to the left or right, there should be plenty of open ground for the party or the candidate who is willing to move toward the center. Avlon even lays out his own idea of a reformist agenda that could seize that ground, ranging from stout defense of fiscal responsibility and environmental protection to advocacy of tort reform, campaign finance reform, and tax simplification.

As a Democrat concerned about my party's potential drift away from the vital center of American politics, I believe Republicans will continue to cede that ground for the foreseeable future, despite the efforts of some in the GOP to graft the style and rhetoric of centrism onto a hard-right agenda. But it's unclear whether the open ground in the center will be claimed by serious party reformers, local or regional mavericks, or merely the occasional third-party candidate.

In the meantime, John Avlon's history of the 20th-century tradition of American centrism will give members of both parties plenty to ponder—and possibly some ideas about how to plot new chapters for the 21st. ◆

CENTRISTS ALL: Roosevelt, Wilson, Clinton, and McCain all shared a commitment to practical problem-solving and an aversion to ideological extremes.

▷ **Ed Kilgore** is policy director of the Democratic Leadership Council. This review first appeared in the *New York Sun*.

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The 90 percent solution

Education comes out near the top of the most important issues in nearly every poll of American voters. Yet school bond issues are twice as likely to go down as to pass. When put to the test, voters would rather have lower taxes than spend more for schools.

Maybe that's because fewer voters have school-aged kids than do—a trend that will only increase with the aging of America. Maybe it's because voters have lost faith in the ability of public schools to improve, even if we spend more money on them.

Whatever the reason, education reform has been an elusive political issue. That needs to change.

If I had my way, every public school would be a public charter school. Each would have high standards, and tough accountability, with well-paid teachers acting as professionals unconstrained by rigid work rules. And every parent could send his or her child to any public school; the funding would follow the child. The public school system would become a marketplace with parents and kids as consumers.

But within this solution lies a major problem. Too much of the current debate is about who controls the schools, not about the quality of education our kids are getting. We need to get beyond that old debate.

I saw a way to do that during my recent visit to University Preparatory Academy (UPA), a public charter school in Detroit run by my friend and fellow New Democrat reformer, Doug Ross.

Ross set a goal for UPA: 90 percent of the kids who start high school will graduate and 90 percent of those will go onto college or post-secondary education. That goal stands in stark contrast to the two-thirds of Detroit public school kids who start high school but quit before their senior years.

Still, Ross expects to succeed. Small schools are the key. UPA started with a sixth grade in 2000. Each year another grade was added. The high school opened this year. UPA is now organized into several small middle schools (grades 6-8) totaling 356 kids, and a high school with 128 ninth graders.

Every student at UPA has an individualized learning program. "Three-quarters of our entering sixth graders read below grade level, with half of that three-quarters reading at fourth grade or below," Ross said. "Handing every kid a sixth grade English book only guarantees that the majority will fail and continue to regard school as a venue of personal failure."

At UPA, there's no anonymity. Students are part of a so-called Advisory—a group of 16 students that stays together through high school under the tutelage of a single teacher called an Advisor. Advisors practically become part of each student's family. That encourages parental participation; 95 percent of parents or guardians are involved on a consistent basis.

Ross has doubled his students' scores on standardized tests in reading and writing, and is now working to do the same for math. UPA does not skim the best students; they are chosen by lottery—and Ross often gets tough cases. An eighth grader named Xam told me he got into UPA after he was expelled from his traditional school in the fifth grade. He's still a challenging kid, but after three years, he has progressed and expects to enroll in the UPA high school next year.

High school kids are required to spend two days a week in a real-world internship. I visited with a young man, Darius Watkins, who is interning with the CEO of a new urban tech park. I met a young woman, Sydney Edwards, interning at the Detroit Science Center, helping to design science experiences for Detroit school kids who visit the center. The internships are tied to each student's interests and learning plan. They enable kids to learn the mainstream culture by being immersed in it. But most important, they create aspiration. Ninety-five percent of UPA students have college in their plans.

Out of Doug Ross' success can come the secret to changing the debate on school reform.

We can begin by agreeing on what we all know: To succeed in the modern economy, today's kids need to get a college education. Our nation's long-term prosperity and economic leadership depends on nothing less.

That's why by the time my two year-old granddaughter reaches high school, our national goal should be that 90 percent of her ninth grade classmates will graduate from high school and 90 percent of those will go onto college or post-secondary education—just like at UPA.

To reach that goal, we'll have to reorganize the public schools. That likely means more small college prep academies like Doug Ross's—and an elementary and middle school system organized to feed them. But let's start by agreeing on that lofty goal. Then some of the fights we now have over who controls the schools may seem far less important. ◆

Al From is founder and CEO of the Democratic Leadership Council.

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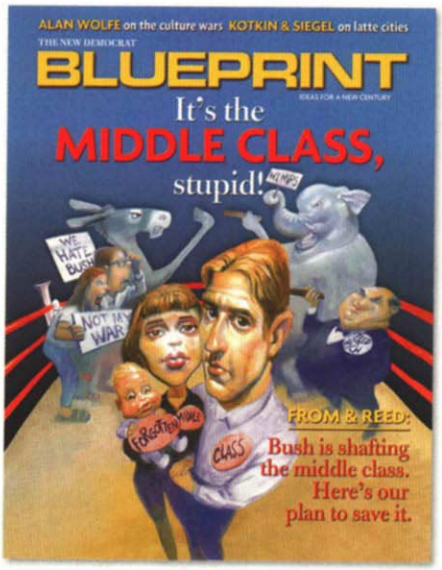
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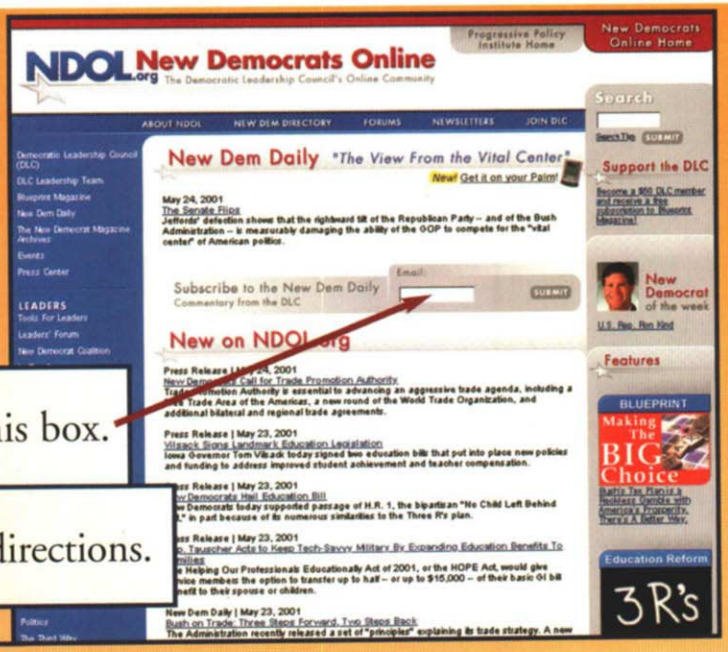

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